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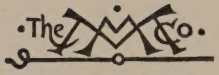

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION

A STUDY IN ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY

IRVING KING, PH.D.

STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

New York

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To

MY FATHER

AND

MOTHER

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PREFACE

As the subtitle indicates, this volume is a study in the social psychology of primitive religion. It is, however, far from complete as first planned. It was the original intention to include a number of topics which are of great interest to the student of primitive religion, such as the development of sacrifice and the origin and development of birth, marriage, death, and burial ceremonies. Not only have some topics been omitted; those which are here offered to the public are far from completely worked out. They have been written at irregular intervals during the past eight years, in the midst of many duties which tended inevitably to destroy the continuity of thought as well as to render a thorough working out of individual problems well-nigh impossible. Under these circumstances it is but natural that, as the work has proceeded, there should have been a change in interest and, to some extent, in point of view.

In treating the various phases of the problem the author has attempted to offer sufficient illustrations to lend weight to the positions he has taken. It has not seemed best to try to make these illustrations exhaustive. In almost every instance those offered are only a tithe of the ones which might have been given.

Nothing set forth in these pages is presented in a dogmatic spirit. In every detail, whether of fact or of interpretation, the author holds himself subject to correction and criticism.

While it is scarcely possible but that some errors have been incurred, it is hoped that the general point of view may appeal to students of anthropology, sociology, and psychology as suggestive and pertinent.

As regards the view-point it is, in a word, that the religious attitude has been *built up* through the overt activities which appear in primitive social groups, activities which were either spontaneous and playful or which appeared with reference to meeting various practical needs of the life-process; and that the development of emotional values has been mediated through the fact that these activities were in the main social.

Many difficulties have naturally attended the satisfactory working out of this view-point. In the first place, social psychology is not itself a clearly defined science with definite and generally accepted principles of method. It is hoped, however, that a series of studies of this sort, even though they are incomplete, may contribute something toward a clarification of the relation of psychology to anthropology and the social sciences. If this should be accomplished, the author will be entirely satisfied, even though every one of his own *specific* conclusions may have to be modified or even rejected. It may be said, then, that the primary purpose of the book is to contribute something toward the definition of social psychology by illustrating the application of psychological method in the interpretation of the data of a relatively limited field of social phenomena. The author is quite well aware that many eminent psychologists would dissent from this conception of psychology, or even hold that there is no such thing as a psychological method in the sense here taken. He does not, however, feel inclined to quarrel over questions of terminology. He believes firmly that there *is* a method of approach to the problems of social development which is most suggestive, and it is to him immaterial whether or not

that method may properly be called psychological. It is the method itself which interests him rather than the name that it may be most proper to apply to it.

Another serious difficulty attends any one who, outside the world of anthropology, presumes to interpret the data afforded by that field. One who has first-hand acquaintance with some of the natural races, and especially with their languages, naturally looks with some suspicion upon the attempts of the psychologist to say anything worth while regarding primitive custom or primitive religion, if, indeed, he even takes notice of such attempts at all. The present writer, however, feels, if a comparative study of primitive religion must wait for a scholar acquainted at first-hand with the races and their languages, that such study will probably never be made. He cannot believe that he who makes such a study, equipped only with the point of view of the anthropologist, is less likely to fall into serious fallacies than is the psychologist who gets his facts at second-hand. What is needed is a friendly coöperation among scholars in an investigation of this sort. The work of neither the anthropologist nor the psychologist can be complete in itself, and yet each is only too ready to regard his statements as the final ones. The present writer has been very clearly conscious of the limitations of his method, but he is frank to say that his failure to attain satisfactory results in many cases has been due to the very character of the observations collected by the anthropologist. Surely some training in psychology would have rendered some of the laborious undertakings of the student of the natural races much more fruitful of results. There are of course notable exceptions, but it is certainly true that much is yet to be desired in the form in which material regarding the customs of present-day natural races is at present gathered together.

The author is indebted to the editors and publishers of various philosophical and psychological journals for permission to use again in Chapters II, VIII, X, XI, and XIII portions of articles which have already been offered in print. He is particularly grateful for the many helpful suggestions and criticisms of friends who so kindly read the manuscript in whole or in part. Particular acknowledgment is due Miss Lela Douthart of Kansas City, Kansas, who rendered valuable and generous assistance in the revision of the manuscript for the press.

State University of Iowa,
September 24, 1909.

CONTENTS

PAGES

PREFACE . . . . . vii–x

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION — THE POSSIBILITY AND THE SCOPE OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

Necessity of a preliminary inquiry into the nature of the material and the possibility of a psychological treatment — Character of previous studies in this field — The differentia of the religious consciousness — Can it be stated best in terms of content or of function? — As far as content goes, leaving preternatural elements (if such there be) out of account, religious states of mind do not appear to be of different species from other aspects of experience — The functional differentia — Preliminary statement of the religious end — The logic of supernaturalism and its relation to the psychology of religion — Impossibility of science's recognizing such elements or factors — Every religious experience, from the very fact of its being known at all, must find its place in the causal series of natural science — Attempt of some to confine the scientific treatment of religion to its 'content' on the ground that religious 'values' lie essentially beyond the pale of science — Criticism of this position — 'Value' as well as 'content' has a natural history, or at least as much natural history as it is possible for *any observable* fact to have — Import of the psychology of religion for the practical religionist — For the theologian — For the philosopher — The one-sidedness of inquiries into the nature of religion which ignores psychology — The psychological problem restated 1–23

CHAPTER II

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE EVOLUTION OF RELIGION

The first problem that of defining more accurately the nature of the content which may be supposed to have undergone an evolution — The assumption of some scholars that this is an instinct or other innate capacity — This involves a total misapprehension of the

PAGES

meaning of the term 'instinct' as it is ordinarily used in biological science — The term has probably been seized upon to give a certain glamour of science to the notion that there is a primitive or innate religious 'sense' — Marshall's instinct theory apparently more scientific — And yet it is incredible that an instinct opposed to all consciously felt self-interests could ever have developed — Difficulty, on this theory, of accounting for religion as a conscious experience — The religious consciousness more than the parallelistic accompaniment of instinctive acts — While the history of religion may presuppose a sort of original or innate religious 'sense' as its starting-point, the science of religion must try to break it up into simpler elements — The naïve use of psychological terminology in the science of religion.

The religious consciousness is of the valuational type — May be described as an attitude — Definition of — The possible truth in the theories criticised above — The common element of all religions is this appreciative or valuating attitude — A relatively simple aspect of consciousness — This is the *content*, the evolution of which we are to explain — In the evolution of religion we probably do not have to deal with any absolute increase in mentality but only with the building up of complex psychical attitudes — Not much increase in absolute mental capacity since the time of primitive man — Attitudes in general, and the religious attitude in particular, built up in each generation through the objective conditions of the life-process — We do not, therefore, need to presuppose any fundamental changes in mentality.

This brings us to the second preliminary problem; namely, that of the conditions which have mediated the developmental process — These are held to be the overt activities of the life-process — Attitudes are the *outcome* of these activities rather than their cause — The consequent close connection between the ethnology and the psychology of religion — The problem of the evolution of religion is then that of showing how this specific type of consciousness has been built up, or differentiated, from a matrix of overt activity and relatively objective phases of consciousness 24–43

CHAPTER III

The Consciousness of Value

The primacy of the valuational consciousness — Its relation to the active aspects of experience — The primitive activities of the life-process and the genesis of the value-consciousness — Relation of custom to

PAGES

valuation — Development of customs from impulsive, instinctive, and practical activities of primitive man — Some customs the mere accumulation of chance variations in elementary life-activities — Illustrations — Others the result of more or less practical recognition of relation of means to end — Illustrations — Others the outcome of emotional overflow during temporarily impeded action — Illustrations — Influence of the play impulse in the development of custom — General emotional consequences of the organization of activity about various objects of attention 44–61

CHAPTER IV

THE GENESIS OF THE RELIGIOUS ATTITUDE

The religious attitude a special development from the valuational consciousness — Possible causes of this specialization of values — The hypothesis of social influence — Import of the social atmosphere in the determination of general human characteristics — In the preceding chapters overt activities, or customs, were seen to lie back of the consciousness of value — We may now add that these activities are in the main social — The social group, at any rate, may greatly stimulate the development of valuation — The social organism is the primitive man's universe — Activities arising within it furnish the matrix from which higher concepts of worth may emerge — Illustrations — A loose social structure mediates vague and evanescent values and *vice versa* — Illustrations from the West Africans, the Eskimo, the Australians, the North American Indians — General illustrations of the relation of value to social types of activity, *e.g.* among the primitive Semites, Hurons, Kafirs, Dyaks, Navaho, West Africans — Relation of modern religious consciousness to social activity 62–87

CHAPTER V

THE ORIGIN OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Religious acts originally social acts or customs of various sorts — Religion not merely modelled upon previous social processes and institutions — Is rather an organic part of the general social *milieu* — Illustration of this fact in the well-known connection of primitive religion with governmental institutions; *e.g.* in the religions of antiquity, among the Eskimo, the Malays, Pueblo and Kwakiutl Indians, the negro races — Meaning of the so-called 'general religiosity' of primitive life — Dependence of religious rites upon

PAGES

social interests and structure illustrated by the Todas, West Africans, Kafirs, Masai — Relation of religious ceremonies to the general social and practical activities of a group — These latter seem to have a definite and easily explainable natural history — All gradations from the purely playful and practical to the religious — Illustrations of this gradation: Pueblo natal ceremonies, Iroquois festivals and dances, feasts of the Thompson Indians, social and semi-religious activities of various negro tribes — The moonlight dances of the Bushman interesting illustrations of the purely playful origin of ceremonial dances — Ordinary social intercourse the basis of some Japanese ceremonials — Other illustrations — The remarkable case of the Todas — Their religious ceremonials clearly extensions of practical and social processes — Ceremonials of the primitive Semites, the Navaho, the Moqui, and the early Romans show like characteristics — Conclusion 88–133

CHAPTER VI

THE MYSTERIOUS POWER

The primitive belief in a mysterious power illustrated by the Algonkin 'concept,' *manitou* — This belief, with variations, widely prevalent among the natural races — A quasi-mechanical, impersonal potency — Probably underlies many types of primitive worship — Further description of the Algonkin belief — Called *wakonda* by the Siouan tribes — Associated with the striking characteristics of animals — The explanation of all human successes — Called by the Iroquois *orenda* — Held by other Indian stocks — Has been frequently misinterpreted by observers — The same belief occurs in Melanesia, New Zealand, and other South Pacific Islands — Although it is here often associated with ghosts and spirits, it is yet quite impersonal and mechanical in its action — Differences between the Melanesian and the Indian belief — Not a development of ghost worship — Presence of the same 'concept' among other primitive peoples, *e.g.* the Bantu, Masai, the nomad tribes of northern Asia — Possibly present among the Australians — Facts that apparently support such a view — An examination of many of their so-called magical rites from this point of view — Its relation to the enforcement of custom — In the *Intichiuma* ceremonies — In beliefs regarding the local totem centres — In the beliefs regarding the 'bull-roarers' — Something analogous to the same 'concept' appears to have been present in the primitive religion of the Romans — Suggestions of, among the early Semites — Conclusion as to the wide prevalence of the notion — Its relation to religion and to magic.

PAGES

A truly primitive 'concept' — Conditions which may have produced it — More naïve than animism — The expression of the most elementary 'take-care' attitude, which need not have been associated with spirits at first — Easy to infer the presence of a mysterious power in whatever attracts attention; *e.g.* in the soughing of the wind, the cunning or strength of animals, etc. — Illustrations which possibly throw some light upon its origin and variations — Not a religious 'concept' and yet it has played a part in the development of religion and especially in the evolution of the belief in a deity — Survivals of this primitive philosophy in modern culture . . 134–164

CHAPTER VII

Magic and Religion

The essential nature of primitive religion may be made clearer by contrasting it with magic — Frazer's theory of the relation of magic to religion stated and criticised — Statement and criticism of Jevons's theory — The problem that of determining the conditions which lie back of magical and religious practices — Many savage customs frequently classed under magic are quite spontaneous reactions of the primitive man to various situations of strain and relaxation — Only with the lapse of time are such acts connected with the idea of controlling certain sequences of events in the world of nature or human life — Development of the theory and practice of sympathetic magic from these primitive and direct responses of the man to his environment — Much of the substrate of habit and custom cannot be called, strictly speaking, either magic or religion, although it is common to interpret much of it as magic — The so-called axiom that 'like produces like,' if it is actually held by primitive man, is more likely an *afterthought* than the *cause* of magical practices — This substrate of primitive naïve activity is evidently the basis of much of the so-called magic of the Australians.

In the case of magic, we have the same basis of playful and of practical attitudes which were found to be associated with the beginnings of religion — The two, however, express different points of view with reference to the world — The latter seems to have separated from the former largely under the influence of social stimulation — This is suggested in the status of the sorcerer among almost all primitive peoples — He is usually a person possessed of secret powers and a sinister disposition as over against the priest, the public functionary — The individualistic character of magic

PAGES

illustrated by the Todas, Niger tribes, Kafirs, Eskimo, Ojibwa, Australians, and many others that might be given — Further confirmation in the supposed relation between magic and disease — This distinction between priest and sorcerer prevails in practically all primitive society — Religion, social; magic, antisocial — Illustrations — Reminiscences of the conflict of religion with sorcery in the modern conflict of religion with science — Further illustrations of the mysterious and private character of magic — Unfamiliar peoples usually supposed to be highly gifted in sorcery — The magician usually acquires his powers through his own subjectivity, or at least in ways lying outside of social agencies — Various illustrations of — Certain marked peculiarities of magic seem to be traceable to its isolation from the stimulus of positive social factors — The possibility of religion's availing itself of magical expedients 165–203

CHAPTER VIII

Further Considerations regarding the Evolution of the Religious Attitude

If the religious attitude is a special differentiation from a matrix of social interests and activities, the question arises as to the sense in which it may be possible to trace an evolution in religion — Some have approached the problem possessed by the idea that they were to discover the successive unfoldings of some primitive instinct, or the progressive revelation of some perfected divine truth — These theories based upon a superficial biological analogy — Social phenomena too complex to be arranged with much assurance in a developmental series — The determination of successive stages of religious development presupposes the ability to compare and relate social backgrounds — The peculiar difficulty attaching to such a task — Diversity in primitive social development — What shall be the criterion? — Variations in religion as dependent upon social backgrounds — From this it would seem to follow that different types of primitive religion are quite discrete and, far from being due to the unfolding of an original instinct common to all mankind, have really no direct relation to each other — Illustrations of this apparent discreteness — Different religious forms go back to different social situations rather than to preceding religious forms — This more largely true of primitive religions than of the modern types — In the latter a degree of stability of content and organiza-

PAGES

tion is attained that seems to give them a certain independence of immediate social conditions as well as a sort of continuity and momentum that enables them to develop along diverse lines, each peculiar to itself — These diverse strains of religious development have, each of them, their own individual merit — No religion can include all possible and legitimate values — Two further points regarding the development of different religious strains — First as regards the *method* of transmission from one generation to another — This dependent upon the transmission of some sort of a body of activity or of religious customs, together with an appropriate conceptual framework, *i.e.* upon social heredity — And secondly, as regards the *means* of the elaboration in successive generations — This in large measure dependent upon the growth of individuality — The development of the higher religious consciousness is always correlated with some development of personality either in extension or intention 204–222

CHAPTER IX

Origin and Development of Concepts of Divine Personages

(I) Only certain phases of this extremely complex problem will be examined here, those especially which have to do with the relation of deities to various economic and social interests — This relation is deeper than a mere reflection of the cultural level of the worshippers — It is rather the expression of certain aspects of social valuation, and is organic with other modes of social reaction — (II) The problem of the natural history of deities is the problem of why social values are to some extent expressed in terms of superior personalities — Deities often supposed to be the peculiar differentia of religion as over against magic — This view is inadequate, however, since deities are only *one* of the means of expressing religious valuation — Furthermore, the primitive mechanical conception of the world should not be separated so radically from the notion of the world as pervaded by spirits — We must avoid at the outset adopting concepts that are too fixed — The well-recognized tendency of all social groups to socialize all that claims their attention is sufficient as a point of departure — The values which are thus socialized may arise from almost every phase of human life and association — Must guard against the tendency to seek the origin of deities within a too narrow set of conditions — The primary question for psychology is, then, as to why certain things have attracted atten-

PAGES

tion in primitive society — This usually due to the fact that they in some way appear to be connected with man's welfare — They are the objects of food value, those connected with protection, reproduction, and the like, animals, plants, stones, disease, etc. — The basis of attention always some more or less intimate relation to the group — Interest in ancestors and spirits usually goes back to some supposed connection with the original interests of the life-process — (III) From this relation of deities to acute social interests we may be able to dispose of the so-called remnants, in primitive life, of higher conceptions of the deity — These vague, far-off gods rather stranded remnants of times when the interests of the group were different from the interests of the present, not necessarily higher gods — Illustrated by the deistic ideas of the Todas — *Real* deities are always associated with matters of vital social concern — Illustrations — (IV) Relations of these objects of social interest to the 'concept' of the 'mysterious potency' — The first germinal deities were those objects or persons supposed to have 'power' — Illustrations — (V) Animals and persons are in various ways associated with supposed manifestations of power — It is an associating rather than personifying process — Illustrations — Evidences of the mystic potency idea in the case of well-developed deities — (VI) Furthermore, the continued reaction of the social group upon the values of the life-process tends, inevitably, to cast them into personal moulds — Hence the so-called culture-hero — Illustrations of, among the Australians — The 'All-father' concept of these people is clearly a social product, with many of the attributes of the true deity, although not worshipped to any extent — Culture-heroes of the Todas, of the North American Indians — In many cases clearly not a divinity — Rather illustrates how a social group thinks of whatever interests it in vital ways in terms of the work of conscious beings of some sort — The gradual transition from the culture-hero and low trickster to the real deity — All these facts lend weight to the hypothesis that deities are social constructions — (VII) The social body is operative, not merely in producing the first associations of value and personality, but also in the higher development of the deistic concept — In every respect it is the result of social activities and modes of thought — Various aspects of this higher influence enumerated and illustrated 223–260

CHAPTER X

The Problem of Monotheism and of the Higher Ethical Conceptions of the Deity

PAGES

The primitive world one of values and social appreciations as well as of brute facts — This the context within which deistic concepts have grown up — Religious concepts in general, and those of deities in particular, are *symbols* of these 'appreciations' rather than *descriptions* of objective fact — The relation of psychology to the supposed objectivity of the deity — Is the view-point here presented adequate for the interpretation of the loftier concepts of the deity? — The problem of the beginnings of monotheism given an artificial difficulty by our tendency to read back into its earlier stages the modern conception — We also tend to deny a natural history to those of our concepts which we deem of most worth — The feeling that they must have been perfect from the first, or else their present worthfulness will be impugned — The atmosphere of the social group is, however, the point of departure for the interpretation of exalted as well as ordinary types of concepts — The notion of a supreme god may appear under favoring conditions in relatively low types of religion — In the absence of these conditions it may be absent in more highly developed types — All essential elements of a monotheistic deity present in the merely tribal god — Psychological *vs.* speculative monotheism — Thus the beginnings of the higher conceptions of the deity among the Hebrews are not entirely unique or unexplainable — Sketch of its development — A practical rather than a metaphysical conception — A more complex problem, in the case of this people, is the development of the ethical character of Yahweh — And yet it is not insoluble — Its key to be found in the development of the character of the people themselves, and especially in the expansion of reflective thought on the part of the prophets — In this way psychology seeks to show that the character of Yahweh was gradually *built up* rather than, as a preexisting something, was little by little *revealed* — Many positive elements in primitive religion which furnish a basis for such a construction — While primitive deities may be said to be the reflections of the character of their worshippers, this character is not necessarily altogether sordid — Illustrations of positive values in primitive life — Phases of primitive Semitic religion which furnished points of departure for the prophets — Every distinguishing character of the Yahweh of the prophets may be traced to concepts and appreciations of life incipient in the general social *milieu* of the

PAGES

early Hebrews — The question of why a similar development did not occur among other Semitic peoples or among other nations of antiquity is to be answered, as must be answered all questions regarding variations in both the biological and the social spheres, viz. that all of them are ultimately unexplainable . . . 261–286

CHAPTER XI

RELIGION AND MORALS, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE AUSTRALIANS

(I) The complexity of the problem of the relation of religion to morals — The phase of the problem to be here discussed is that of the significance of the common basis of custom underlying primitive religion and primitive morality — (II) Early ideas regarding the moral degradation of the Australians explained — Necessity of judging them in terms of their own social structure — Not here the question as to whether this was of a high or low order — Personal virtues, honesty, fortitude, and self-restraint, modesty, sexual morality, treatment of wives and children, of the old and infirm, cannibalism, watchfulness of the old over the conduct of the young — Questions of right and wrong arose chiefly in connection with their strict tribal regulations — Many admirable qualities appeared in their social life before contact with whites was common — (III) Concluding remarks on the problem of this chapter . 287–305

CHAPTER XII

APPARENT CONNECTION OF RELIGION WITH PATHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES

Attention thus far centred upon the method by which the different aspects of the religious attitude have been built up — The question now raised as to the *status* of the religious form of consciousness in the general mental economy — Recent tendency to lay stress upon the pathological in religion — Is it an essential characteristic of religious experience? — Difficulty of answering this question dependent partly upon the complexity of religious phenomena and partly upon uncertainty as to the actual limitations of the pathological — We shall here consider the pathological simply as the *unusual* — Unusual mental and motor phenomena have certainly been common in all religions — These are taken by the religious mind as proofs of the reality of its valuations — Such phenomena

PAGES

cannot be discredited on the ground that they are not manifestations of genuine religion — The possibility that a genuine religious attitude may have really undesirable consequences when judged by the rest of the life-process — Two problems: What aspect of the religious attitude has tended to foster unusual mental and motor phenomena? and, Are these phenomena merely pathological, or have they had any positive value in the development of religion? — The nature of religious appreciations and the quasi-hypothesis of supernaturalism have tended to produce such experiences — The second problem — We may take up in this connection the place of the so-called subconscious in the unusual experiences of religion — If the subconscious is regarded as a connecting link between the individual and preternatural powers, it is mere primitive philosophy in the guise of modern science — Nevertheless, the phenomena of the subconscious may have some significance in the development of higher religious valuations — General statement of the nature of subconscious processes — Their relation to the rest of the mental life — The place of subconscious factors in the valuational experience — In unusual experiences generally — Possesses a certain positive value for all conscious processes, although not intrinsically superior to them — The place of mental pathology in the development of individuality — Modern religious types differ largely from the primitive in the increased importance in the former of the individual person — This has not, however, destroyed the essential sociality of religion, but has rather worked out its intention — Various illustrations — The case of William Monod, the modern French messiah — Social acceptance continues to be the test of religious truth rather than certain supposedly unusual experiences — Conclusion 306–337

CHAPTER XIII

Religious Valuation and Supernaturalism

Notwithstanding the psychological points made in the preceding chapter, it may yet be true that religious valuations require the hypothesis of a supernatural world with which the devotee may hold intercourse — The question perfectly legitimate — The place of the religious consciousness in the life-process — Religious concepts and appreciations, even when regarded as merely symbols of relationships and meanings, may still contribute to clarification of the problems of living — They *understate* rather than *overstate* the

PAGES

nature of reality — The theories of the supernatural world, held by the early Church, were purely practical hypotheses rather than metaphysical interpretations of reality — The following ages took them in the latter sense — Supernaturalism as mere symbolism will probably always have a place in the religious consciousness — It is an evidence of the essential sociality of human nature and of the sociality of religion, as one of the expressions of human nature 338–353

BIBLIOGRAPHY 355–361

INDEX 363–371

The totality of causes of phenomena is inaccessible to human understanding, but the necessity of finding causes is innate in the human soul. The human mind, without entering into the multiplicity and complexity of the conditions of phenomena, each separate one of which may appear as a cause, grasps at the first, most likely approximation, and says, "Here is a cause!" . . . There are no causes of a historical event, and there can be none, except the only cause of all causes. But there are laws which guide the events, and these are partly unknown and partly guessed at. The discovery of these laws will be possible only when we absolutely refrain from trying to find the causes in the will of one man, just as the discovery of the motion of the planets became possible only when people abandoned the conception of the stability of the earth. — TOLSTOY, *War and Peace*.

DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE POSSIBILITY AND SCOPE OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

SINCE the investigation of religious experiences and religious practices is even yet a comparatively new line of psychological inquiry, it seems not inappropriate to introduce the studies which follow with a general discussion of the nature and the extent of the subject-matter and with an inquiry into the presuppositions necessary to such a treatment. We shall therefore inquire briefly into the nature of the material, the extent to which it is susceptible of a psychological statement, and, finally, into the relation of such a treatment of religious phenomena to the problems of practical religion, to theology, and to the philosophy of religion.

In the first place, then, what is the material with which the psychology of religion may properly deal? In what respect, if at all, is it distinguishable from the material of general psychology: or does, indeed, the psychology of religion have any valid status as a field of investigation apart from the content of general psychology? If it can be differentiated, shall it be on the side of content or on the side of the functions served by certain contents which appear in other relations as well as in those which are recognized as religious? Different investigators have already taken up various specific phases of the subject with but slight recognition of the necessity

of answering these questions before attempting to deal adequately with particular problems.

For instance, certain emotional states have been studied very thoroughly, experiences such as the exaltation or the ecstasy of the mystic, the trance state and other kindred phenomena, all of which are clearly paralleled by much that is well known to students of abnormal psychology.[1] Many striking religious experiences have been examined, more or less carefully, and their organization and mode of development have been stated in ordinary psychological terms. A notable instance, of many that might be mentioned, is Royce's study of John Bunyan, published some years ago.[2] Other students have investigated the phenomena of 'conversion.' These phenomena have been examined with reference to their character, the manner and time of their appearance, and the attempt has been made, with some success, to connect them with various periods of mental and physical development, to correlate them, if possible, with other recognized aspects of the life-process.[3] Some psychologists have traced here and there a recognized law of mental operation in these same religious states; as, for example, that of suggestion

[1] Cf. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian;* William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience;* J. H. Leuba, "Tendances fondamentales des mystiques chrétiens," *Revue Philosophique*, Vol. LIV, pp. 1–36, 441–487; and "On the psychology of a group of Christian mystics," *Mind*, N. S., Vol. XIV, pp. 15–27; Delacroix, *Etudes d'histoire et de psychologie du mysticisme*, Paris, 1908; Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, New York, 1905; Cutten, *Psychological Phenomena of Christianity*, New York, 1908. This list might be much extended, but it is not the purpose to offer a complete bibliography. We wish merely to illustrate the statements made above. This is also the purpose of the following footnotes.

[2] "The case of John Bunyan," *Studies in Good and Evil*, pp. 29–75, New York, 1889.

[3] E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, New York, 1899, is representative of these studies, of which there have been many, although less elaborate than this.

as the cause of conversion.[1] Moreover, the religious attitude, as such, has been examined in itself, apart from the conventionalities of recognized creeds, the aim being to determine its essential content and then to trace its manifestations in all the variations that come with age, sex, time, and race.[2] Manifestly, such attempts to isolate the characteristic elements of the religious attitude mark important advance steps in the psychology of religion. In no case, however, to our knowledge, has the question of the *nature* of the material itself been raised with sufficient definiteness. In the first investigations the beginnings of a method are suggested, but the question is not raised as to how far that method may be generalized, or as to how far its implications can be carried out to their logical conclusion. In fact, some students suggest that the psychology of religion, while it possesses a certain value, has important limitations, that beyond a certain point religious phenomena cannot be psychologized.[3] The net outcome of much that has been written is that certain extreme aspects of religious experience seem to fall definitely within the domain of abnormal psychology; that there is apparently a correlation of many religious phenomena with other psychical and physical facts; that the same laws are valid, in many cases, both for religious and non-religious phenomena; and lastly, that there are distinct manifestations marked off very definitely in many people, manifestations which deserve scientific investigation as aspects of human consciousness.

[1] G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, New York, 1900; also Davenport, *op. cit.*, and Stoll, *Suggestion und Hypnotismus in der Völkerpsychologie.*

[2] Cf. articles by Leuba, "Introduction to a psychological study of religion," and "The contents of religious consciousness," *The Monist*, Vol. XI, pp. 195–255, 535–573; and "Religion: its impulses and its ends," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. LVII, pp. 757–769.

[3] Coe and Leuba have, however, protested vigorously against such limitation of the field of the psychology of religion.

On the basis of the above results, we now turn to the further question as to whether all the phenomena of religion, the normal as well as the abnormal, on the side of actual content,[1] fall legitimately within the domain of the psychological sciences, or whether there is a certain portion, general or restricted, that, while correlated to some extent with the facts of ordinary experience, and even subject to the same laws, yet remains qualitatively distinct from them and within a sphere of its own. We say, then, that the nature of the material, or content, of the religious consciousness should be carefully examined. If the facts with which we are to deal are different from the other facts of consciousness, will it be possible to state exactly the nature of the difference? For instance, are religious states produced by supernatural influences, whereas apparently similar states outside the pale of religion are built up and organized according to mechanical laws of association? Or shall we say that, though the actual psychical elements are different, they appear to be controlled by the same laws that govern other mental states? If it should be found that there is no difference in content or in origin, the question still presents itself as to whether there may be a difference in the functions of religious and non-religious states of consciousness. Are they distinguishable on the ground that they have a peculiar function in the life of the individual or of the race? If so, how have the ends or ideals which seem to be subserved by these states of consciousness been developed, and what, if any, has been the influence of these ends upon the psychic elements involved in realizing them?

Let us see what can be said of the view that the psychical elements are *different* from other conscious states, that the

[1] J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, New York, 1907, discusses 'belief,' in part, from this point of view.

contents of the religious consciousness are in some sense peculiar or unique? On first thought it may seem that they are unique. Mental states they certainly are, but can they be said to be of the same genus as other mental states? This question has seldom been raised by the religious person himself, because the *significance*, or *meaning*, of his experiences has appealed to him as of such transcendent importance that the content of those experiences, if it had anything originally in common with the rest of his psychic life, has at least been so modified by its reference to 'higher things' as to have become qualitatively different from his other experiences. This supposition of difference of content has been further strengthened by the implicit assumption that in their manner of coming to consciousness, in their manner of growth, and in their modes of expression, religious experiences are not subject to the laws according to which the rest of the mental life manifests itself. In other words, it is often assumed that experiences of the religious type contain some sort of superhuman or mystical elements which, of necessity, fall outside the pale of human investigation. Hence, even though the mental states themselves are not different from other mental states, they become so by being intertwined with forces coming from outside the individual's experience. We shall presently consider the logical consequences for the psychology of religion of this assumption. Let us here examine for a moment the experiences themselves. Are they, on their face, different in kind from other mental states? They do not appear to be so. The experiences thought to be religious have varied greatly with time and place. There seems to be a constant flux of ordinary mental states into and out of the sphere of religious meanings. It is true that religious feelings, for instance, have in many cases names of their own, but this cannot be taken to mean

that they are intrinsically different from other feelings. Thus there is the 'sense of sin,' of forgiveness, of 'imperfection'; so also we have religious fear, love for the deity, states of peace, of joy, resignation. In fact, it would be hard to find a single determinable feeling or emotion in the entire gamut of human experience that has not had at some time and for some persons a religious meaning. The same may be said of religious ideas, judgments, choices, and acts of will. In fine, as every student of comparative religion must feel, there is not a single aspect of the conscious life which conceivably, if not actually, may not have formed a part of some religious attitude.

Nor is it easier to discover objects in the external world which have not in some shape or form had value for some religious mind. There seem, in fact, to be no aspects of the religious consciousness, as far as its content goes, that clearly differentiate it from other phases of experience; hence we are driven to the conclusion that, with the possible exception of supernatural causation, the religious attitude can be differentiated only with reference to its end, function, or meaning. If there are superhuman factors involved, they must appear merely as *causes* of experiences which, when they have come to light, bear all the marks of ordinary conscious states and appear to be governed by the same laws.

Still, leaving out of account the possibility of a difference in content due to supernatural influences acting in the manner suggested above, it would seem, from the foregoing discussion, that there is no ground on which to establish a distinctive subject-matter for the psychology of religion unless it can be done on the side of end or function. If there can be shown to be an end or process that may be called religious, in contradistinction to other ends or processes, there must, then, be a distinctive material, of which it will be legitimate to inquire whether it may or may not be subjected to psychological treat-

ment. When we attempt, however, to determine this possible end, there appears, at first glance, to be as little chance of satisfactory definition as in the case of the religious content. There is as great a variety of religious ends as there is of religious contents. We may, however, offer a purely tentative suggestion as to a possible end and see how it will work out. In general, it seems to be true that a person in a religious frame of mind regards his experiences as referring to something most fundamental, either to his own welfare or to that of others whom he feels are intimately bound up with himself. The religious attitude may be said to be a peculiar organization of mental processes about the final meanings of life as they are conceived by the individual or the social group.[1] This ultimate meaning may be interpreted in large measure by a deity or deities, or by spirits, good or bad, conceived as having some vital relation to human activity or human needs. It may even find expression in no unseen force of any kind, but simply in an ideal, a state or condition, in something, however, that is felt to have fundamental importance and with reference to which present activity and modes of thought are modified and directed. The purpose of the psychology of religion, then, would seem to be the investigation of such problems as these: How and why has the consciousness of these ultimate values arisen? By what means does this consciousness find expression? Granted a more or less continuous appreciation of these ultimate values, why have the reactions to them *varied* with time, place, and individual? What is the significance of the apparent absence of this attitude in many individuals, especially in modern times?

It shall be our object, then, to examine a certain body of material, or content, if we please to call it such, with ref-

[1] Cf. Menzies, Allan, *History of Religion*, p. 24, for a somewhat similar conception.

erence to its end, or significance, in a larger process. If this content of conscious states and activities is the same as that content which is operative in other phases of experience, and yet different in the functions which it subserves, we have a fairly definite starting-point from which to trace its natural history. If the material with which we are to deal were different more or less from the ordinary contents of consciousness, we should lack an important leverage that identity of content would give us. Knowledge of a given content, as it exists in some other context, subserving other ends, may contribute largely to the understanding of that content in another sphere. So much, then, as to the nature of the problem, if the relational method of treatment is adopted. To the present writer, it seems impossible to mark off any distinctive field for the psychology of religion on the basis of the particular experiences taken in themselves. Only when we come to consider them in relation to some assumed end can we admit that we have a distinctive and legitimate problem. Of course we have not as yet fully considered the possibility of an actual difference of content due to the operation of preternatural forces. These, as was stated above, if they are to be taken into account at all, must be regarded as causes of mental states which, as far as observation can extend, appear not unlike the content of the rest of experience. It might also be held that these external forces determined in some subtle way the form and organization of the religious experience.

The only possible way to deal with this problem is from the logical side, and from this point of view we may ask: Are the various reactions which fall within the religious category to be regarded as complete, or are they on the human side *incomplete*, requiring that various superhuman elements be joined in some way with the *disjecta membra* of the human experience that the statement on the existential side may be

complete? If the latter alternative is the true one, we may say at once that we do not believe there can be a psychology of religion in any proper sense of the word. If the content of the religious consciousness is subject to a different organization from that of other known psychic states, and if, above all, it is not susceptible of a complete statement within itself, but requires the interpolation of some 'spiritual' elements to fill it out, it would clearly be vain to seek for any more than disconnected statements of variously isolated or partially related elements, elements which could be completely stated only through the speculations of theologian and philosopher. From a scientific point of view, nothing definite could ever be established about these reactions, since it would be as impossible for psychology to determine its own limitations in dealing with them as it would be for it to try to subject the so-called 'spiritual' elements of the experience in question to a scientific examination. The difficulty confronting psychology, under these circumstances, would be identical with that which one experiences in trying to conceive an end to space. It makes no difference whether space is finite or infinite; the non-spacial can never be represented as bounding the spacial. The two cannot be related in terms of contiguity, for that would amount to describing the non-spacial in terms of the spacial. To put the problem in Kantian terms, it is that of the relation of phenomena to noumena. There may be noumena or there may not be noumena; the whole question of their existence is absolutely indifferent to the rational description of phenomena. If a noumenon were to stand between two phenomena and condition the passage from one to the other, it would mean either that the noumenon was a phenomenon or nothing at all, as far as knowledge goes.

No science can be built upon the assumption of an interaction between two unlike worlds, one of which is knowable,

and the other either unknowable or subject to different laws and categories from the first. There may be, and in fact are, many unexplained gaps in the known world, but the scientist does not dare to call in a noumenon to bridge the gap. He must work upon the assumption either that there are *no* gaps, or that, with increase of knowledge, they will eventually be filled in and explained in phenomenal terms. Many philosophers have laid great stress upon the fragmentary character of science, pointing out, to use the figure of Ward's,[1] that instead of its being a great sphere that is gradually enlarging its diameter by its encroachments upon the unknown beyond, it is really only a patchwork with vast rifts of the unknown penetrating to its very core, the various parts of the patchwork not even fitting together. Points of view such as this are susceptible of two interpretations: either these *lacunæ* in our knowledge will gradually disappear before the explorer, or they offer an eternal barrier to the progress of finite knowledge. Every scientist would be obliged to take the first of these alternatives, at least as a working hypothesis. If there are unbridgable *chasms* in the sphere of the 'known,' he cannot know of them. The assertion that they exist is merely a play upon words. If they exist, he cannot locate them, nor can he think of them or image them in any way, and so for him they are non-existent. The scientist is perfectly safe in assuming that his realms may finally be extended so as to include everything, for there could be no science on any other assumption. The mere possibility of elements not subject to the categories of science scattered through the world of phenomena would vitiate the entire work of the scientist. If there are preterrational elements, there is at least no danger that they may ever intrude to spoil the structure of reason. Every known element must be susceptible of some sort of an explana-

[1] James Ward, *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, Vol. I, pp. 26, 27.

tion in terms of the rest of the world.[1] This is the *condition* of its being known. It may seem that there has been an undue insistence upon this point, but the ordinary looseness of thought regarding the nature and possibility of the science of religion is proof that it has not been sufficiently recognized. It is, in fact, a general tendency of all naïve thinkers to insist on the presence of non-rationalizable elements in whatever is esteemed of great worth, as if the presence of such would make these values more worthy of respect. Thus, it is common to postulate some inner entity or soul, and to insist that the psychological concept of stimulus and response is not a sufficient basis upon which to explain conscious phenomena. It may be true that this particular conception is not adequate, but the point of those who usually object to it is that *neither this nor any other concept will answer the purpose*, that there will *always* be a non-explainable something; that if there were not, the integrity of personality would be menaced.

The facts of religious experience, no matter how different from those of ordinary life, the elements of a religious consciousness, no matter how unique, from the very fact of their existence as data of knowledge, are susceptible, or ought to be susceptible, of a scientific treatment. And such a treatment can with perfect consistence ignore all supersensible elements and insist that its statement is or can be made absolutely as *complete* as that made by the physicist or by the psychologist who deals with ordinary experience. A scientific statement has no meaning except within a closed system of definite relations. This system is not necessarily *all* of reality, but each new fact discovered is recognized solely because of its ability to enter the existing system either as a new member of that system or as

[1] In this general connection, cf. the excellent discussion of G. B. Foster's in his *Finality of the Christian Religion*, Chap. VI, "The naturalistic and religious world-views."

a reorganizer of it. There may easily be realities that will always fall outside any rational system that we can construct, but as such they can never be known, and hence can never destroy the equilibrium of the system of the known. It is not maintained that *every* fact must appeal to every one as rational, but rather that every step is taken on the assumption that it is, or will be found to be, rational, if time enough is given for searching it out and utilizing it. Neither the supersensible nor the irrational can enter into relationship with the sensible and the rational in a way that can be conceived or described.

In the science of religion, therefore, we do not need to discuss the question as to whether there may be a connection between the natural and the supernatural. There *may* be a connection, but the categories of experience are not capable of describing it. The scientific examination of religion cannot, of course, deny the reality of supernatural elements in the various contents and processes of the religious consciousness. It simply holds that the relation of one to the other is such as cannot be described in phenomenal terms. It is, moreover, entirely admissible for the practical religionist to symbolize his feeling of the ultimate worthfulness of his religious experiences by holding that they are of divine origin. His assumption is, however, a purely practical expedient. The statements he makes are not existential but practical. They are ways of stating to one's self the meaning of particular experiences for one's life, or they may be said to be indices of a certain attitude in the person rather than descriptions of external existence. Thus, the highest religious concept, that of the deity, is an expression of personal attitude rather than a statement of an existence of some sort which may reveal itself by various interpolations within the natural order of phenomena.

The relationship of God to the world was once conceived

in spacial and causal terms. But every advance of science has made such connections more remote. The endeavor to maintain the status of the divine through miracles and special providences, or to make it the *first* cause, are special aspects of this conception. Some persons have thought, since the farthest reaches of telescopic vision do not reveal God in space, and since science and the doctrine of chances explain away the miracles and special providences, that his existence is thereby disproved, whereas the only thing that is done by these advances of science is to illustrate the futility of attempting to describe God as a phenomenon, and hence his relation to the world and to conscious minds in phenomenal categories.[1]

The point of interest in this passage is the recognition of the fact that the relation of the world of rational and rationalizable things and experiences to any supernatural world is not to be stated in terms of ordinary knowledge. It also presents an attempt at a schematic statement of the nature of the relation. The latter may or may not be a proper question for philosophy; it is manifestly not one that concerns the psychologist.

Before passing from the question discussed above, we should not fail to note an attempt to deal with it in terms of existential and valuational judgments.[2] It is held that the *content*

[1] The following quotation (condensed) from Howison's *Limits of Evolution*, pp. 72–74, emphasizes the point we have made above: —

"God is not separate from the world, but effectually present in it, and the distinction between the soul and the God who recognizes and redeems it can never be truly stated as a distinction in place and time, a separation in space and by a period, a contrast between efficient cause and produced effect. On the contrary, the distinction must be viewed as a contrast (and yet a relation) between centres of consciousness, each thoroughly self-active; and further, as a distinction in the mode by which each conscious centre defines its individual being in terms of its ideal. In short it must be thought in terms of *final cause* alone. No mind can have an *efficient* relation to another mind. Efficiency is the attribute of every mind toward its own acts and life or toward the world of mere things which forms the theatre of its action."

[2] Cf. W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Lecture I.

of a religious experience is to be rigidly distinguished from its *value*, and that each should receive separate treatment. The content is regarded as the appropriate subject-matter for science, while the meaning, or value, of this content is more or less ultra-rational. Now, while such a separation may be made, we should hold that it is purely one for convenience in describing the experience, and does not imply qualitatively different sets of facts, one of which is rationalizable and one irrational or superrational. The basis of the view just criticised seems to be an acceptance at their face value of the estimates set upon these experiences by the religious person himself. That the religious mind deals with supposedly preternatural values is not to be taken by the scientist as an indication that this worthfulness is incapable of rationalistic treatment. He has as much right to inquire into what facts of experience religious valuations deal with as he has to describe the content of the experience. In a final philosophy of the universe it may be found to be true that the valuational reference of the religious experience will be a valid statement of an order of existence beyond human experience. But the scientist cannot presuppose any such considerations and remain a scientist. He *must* find in these valuations attempts to deal with some phase of the actual content of experience. In general, he will see in the supernatural reference attributed by the religious mind to its experiences a symbolic method of stating those values which seem to it to be greatest and most abiding. In other words, if it be granted that the supernatural reference of the religious judgment is to be interpreted as a method of symbolizing certain aspects of experience, it would seem that religious valuations should possess just such a natural history as do ordinary types of value. Thus, while we should admit that it may be desirable to distinguish between existence and meaning, this

does not of itself lend any weight to the assumption that the meaning of an experience transcends scientific analysis or description.

If the peculiar differentia of the religious consciousness lies on the side of the functions served rather than on that of intrinsic psychic content, it would seem to be impossible to leave meaning and value out of account in treating of religion, for no function can be intelligibly discussed out of connection with the end to which it is adjusted. As was stated in the preceding paragraph, it does not follow that the end or value to be considered can be taken in just the sense in which the religionist states it for himself. There is no doubt of our right to abstract from his estimates of the meaning of his experiences. All his predications of value are themselves facts to be explained along with his other experiences. The values and ends for the psychologist are probably quite different from those conceived by the possessor of the experience. The two different senses of value or end, and hence of function, may be illustrated in the field of æsthetics. The functional relations of certain æsthetic stimuli may, on the one hand, be said to be the succeeding states of consciousness caused by these stimuli, or perhaps, more generally, the psychological process, or context, in which they occur. To the recipient of these stimuli, however, their function is not the psychological setting, but something more objective. The naïve mind is not concerned with conscious states, but with an objective world. In so far as the conscious states come to attention, they are interpreted with reference to the conceived objective order. The æsthetic stimuli may perhaps be conceived as agencies for bringing him into contact with existences or experiences that lie more or less remote from his immediate self. As such they bear a direct relation to these remote values, to this objective order that they mediate.

From these two points of view the function of the impressions produced by a great painting may be stated in terms of the actually resulting psychic experiences of pleasure or pain in all their subtle ramifications and combinations, or it may be stated more objectively, as the means of heightening the recipient's sense of duty in some specific way, or of making him feel more keenly some truth or some aspiration, or of bringing him into more intimate contact with some objective reality, so called.

The case of religion is precisely analogous to the above. Here there are certain states of consciousness that are regarded as valuable by the individual; they mean to him a heightening of his sense of 'divine presence,' a strengthening of his natural powers by 'supernatural' agencies. These states of mind bring him consolation, peace, fear, self-condemnation, and the like. The functional statement from this point of view may be almost anything that individual caprice can imagine. But for psychology, this hypothetical objective context itself needs explanation, and it is the task of psychology to seek a more general setting of other mental states and processes. Questions such as the following, psychology must ask concerning the objective world which has been constructed by the religious person: How has he acquired the consciousness of this or that end or value? How does it come that he has sought to gain these conditions of *rapport* with superior powers? How have certain conscious states acquired a significance for this purpose under certain conditions, while, under other conditions, the same mental elements occur without these evaluations? How also do the selected conscious states fulfil their peculiar function of producing in the individual these value judgments? It is with questions of this type that we are concerned in these studies.

The question of the validity of the individual's experience,

that is, whether it is *worth* what he claims for it or not, may or may not be touched by the psychological statement. The inquiry that is here proposed should, however, give us a certain amount of presupposition for or against such validity. The examination of the origin and development of a content cannot, in other words, be absolutely cut off from its present efficiency or lack of efficiency. "An inquiry into the origin of a fact is by no means an attempt to prejudice its present value. It is rather undertaken that we may understand the present value more adequately. . . . No effects can be evaluated out of relation to the conditions with reference to which they have occurred."[1] The value-judgment is not applied to a content as a thing that exists in and of itself, but with reference to some end. The way in which the end is met certainly throws light upon the means. The nature of the make-up of a carpenter's tool, its origin and content, will be definitely related to its value for the carpenter's work. Any discussion of the merit or demerit of the particular tool will have no direct bearing upon the validity of the trade in which it is used. If, however, it should be found that the tools as a whole used by the carpenter were decidedly inferior in material and workmanship to the tools of other trades, there would be a suspicion aroused that either the carpenter's trade was itself an inferior one, or else that it failed to come up to its own possibilities. Likewise, in the psychology of religion, not only are contents to be distinguished functionally, but the functions themselves are to be in a measure criticised through the contents. This is possible because the contents come to us from other contexts with a certain natural history. We can thus say of them that, as far as structure goes, they are good or bad, a fact that must be taken into account when

[1] I. King, "Pragmatism as philosophic method," *Philosophical Review*, September, 1906.

they are examined with reference to their functions in the new sphere.

It seems strange that so many have considered it necessary to limit the scientific study of religion to its bare content or to its 'existential' aspects, excluding the sphere of meaning as something too sacred or subtle to be thus desecrated. But it is certainly as legitimate to seek within the circle of the life-process the origin of all values, together with their inter-relationships, as it is to seek to interpret the so-called contents of experience in these terms. The psychologist can admit nothing into his statement that comes from without this process, and all within it he considers as the legitimate object of his research. He does not need, however, to ignore the fact that to some of his material there is attributed an external reference of some sort. His position should simply be that the *fact* of an outside reference requires to be stated in terms of the life-process itself. The matter of an outside reference is itself a fact of no little interest and, in so far as it is an aspect of the religious consciousness, it becomes a problem for the psychologist.

On logical grounds, at any rate, then, it seems necessary to assume that every phase of the religious experience is legitimate material for the psychologist. There is no danger of preternatural elements ever appearing and rendering the psychologist's descriptions inadequate. Every element of experience, conscious or subconscious, is definitely related to other elements of experience or to the biological processes of the physical organism. The system is complete. If preternatural causation were possible through the subconscious regions of the mind, there could be no psychology of religion. All of the accounts of it which we might be able to give would be hopelessly confused, for we would never know when we had a strictly natural fact and when a supernatural one, and

further, there would be no criterion for determining which was which. This alone is the basis on which a psychology of religion can be constructed, and it is a basis in perfect accord with the presuppositions of every science. The only question is as to whether we must necessarily make these presuppositions. The very fact of the existence and triumph of science in the modern world is itself an answer *absolutely in the affirmative.*

If it is true that a psychological statement of the religious consciousness is possible, it would seem that such a statement should be a *conditio sine qua non* for all other theoretical inquiries into the nature of religion. It is such a prerequisite because in this way only can the material as such be clearly conceived. It is possible, of course, to state the subject-matter of any conceptual system in many different ways, each intrinsically of equal worth. One statement is better than another only as we take into account other existing systems of knowledge. If it be granted that the elements of the religious consciousness are first of all psychic phenomena, it would seem to be indispensable to all further treatment of them to know them definitely first of all *as psychic phenomena.* This should be a vital need, at least for theology. The theologian uses, in the main, terms that came into use long before a science of religion was possible. The dogmatic concepts of the religious life, in other words, rest upon unevaluated experience, or rather, they are the outgrowth of an evaluation of experience that belongs to an earlier stage of culture. The terms are, in the main, figurative, as were all scientific terms originally. But in the case of religious concepts it is peculiarly needful that there be a reconstruction with reference to the psychological terms that have been built up independently and which yet refer to the same content. Thus only can they be freed from their connotation

derived wholly from ages whose methods of thought were totally different from our own. The necessity for this analysis and reconstruction has not been felt because the experiences in question have been supposed to be ultimately valid and immediately known by some inner sense so as to render the assistance of reflective thought superfluous. As a result of this general attitude, each interpreter of the religious life naïvely makes his terms mean anything he chooses. He consequently finds in them merely a reflection of his own predispositions and prejudices. If, on the other hand, it were known and recognized in theology exactly what psychic phenomena the 'new birth,' 'the baptism of the Holy Ghost,' 'the old man' 'the sense of sin,' and the like terms stand for, it would be possible eventually to build up a consistent and useful body of doctrine. If the religious attitude is one that it is desirable to cultivate, the possibility of doing it would be greatly increased by such a scientific knowledge of its content and relationships. Such a knowledge would also furnish a basis of control for the development of the religious consciousness in the race. The concepts of the religionist are, of course, to him relatively fixed affairs. We shall try presently to get a psychological statement for the conservatism of religion; for the present it may be taken for granted. From the standpoint of his conservatism the religionist feels that the values with which he deals are fixed for all time. Different concepts of value held by others are thought to be due to wilful blindness or lack of 'light.' The historical and comparative study of religion proves, however, that this fixity is only apparent, or at the most pertains merely to the formal aspects of expression and practice. From the standpoint of emphasis and reference, the content of religion is constantly shifting. To get the full significance of these changes, we need to know something of the functional relations in the life-process of such processes

as feeling and emotion, of cognition and volition. The purely historical study of religion must be supplemented by a genetic account of the development of consciousness. All this should prepare the way for definite answers to various questions regarding current religious practice and belief. The distinctive value of this genetic-psychological study consists in the light it throws upon the origin of the present religious attitude and the possible future course of development of that attitude.

If the practical religionist needs the data and presuppositions of his faith examined, the philosopher of religion stands in an equal need. The great variety of definitions of religion that philosophers have given us is in itself evidence of the desirability of a preliminary analysis of the subject-matter in terms of general psychology. The philosopher uses psychological terms in his discussions, but usually unanalyzed ones. A psychological term cannot, however, be used offhand. It is meaningless to say that religion is chiefly emotion. Emotion itself needs to be defined. A typical definition from this point of view is that of Pfleiderer.[1] "In the religious consciousness all sides of the whole personality participate. Of course we must recognize that knowing and willing are here not ends in themselves, as in science and morality, . . . but rather subordinated to feeling as the real centre of religious consciousness." Entirely aside from the question as to the truth or falsity of this definition, it is evident that feeling, knowing, and willing are here taken as given elements, by a proper mixture of which the religious consciousness is produced. The definition seems to be constructed entirely aside from any inquiry into the interrelations of these aspects of mental process in experience as a whole, and this re-

[1] "The notion and problem of the philosophy of religion," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. II, p. 131. January, 1893.

lationship can be determined only by a study of consciousness from the genetic point of view. This definition is typical of what the philosopher attempts to do with religion by manipulating psychological concepts. These stand for so many static elements that he arranges to suit the *a priori* idea of the religious consciousness or of religious evolution. For the psychologist, however, religious phenomena are primarily reactions of a certain kind and, as such, have some sort of a setting within the life-process of the individual or at least of the race. By treating them as reactions of a particular type, we have at least a starting-point for some perfectly definite inquiries, a basis on which a really scientific investigation is possible. The old method of trying to determine the essential qualities of the religious consciousness, whether emotional, volitional, or intellectual, by an analysis of religion in and of itself is scarcely more profitable than the scholastic explication of concepts. In the psychological study proposed we do not seek to draw a line around some definite content that we shall choose to call religious; our inquiry is as to the sort of mental contents that will emerge and become organized, if a reaction toward certain ends is admitted as a fact.

The lack of a psychological basis is evident in practically all discussions of religious phenomena. In some way or other nearly all are one-sided on account of the failure to take account of the implications of the reaction as the fundamental psychic unit. Thus the accounts that we receive of the religious practices of the natural races usually go no farther than descriptions of the overt activities, with perhaps their objective significance to the people concerned. Now, the interpretations by the people themselves are not of direct psychological value. They are facts, *also*, as we said above, that need explanation. The psychological problem

is why there *is* such and such an attitude, and why it finds expression in this or that sort of practice; and further, what are its functions along with other attitudes and reactions. These questions are raised entirely aside from what the religious consciousness itself assumes that it expresses or refers to. Similarly, the more subjective types of religion are not dealt with psychologically by giving simply the significance of the states to those who possess them. The religionist sees in various practices and conscious states the expression, true or false, of a religious attitude, instinct, or intuition. The philosopher traces in the various practices the gradual unfolding, or perhaps perversion, of certain truths, ideas, or *a priori* notions. The psychologist, we may be permitted to repeat, should attempt to treat the acts and states of consciousness with reference to their setting and function in the general life-process.

CHAPTER II

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE EVOLUTION OF RELIGION

THAT there has been an evolution of religion, no one can doubt; but there seems to be much uncertainty regarding the precise nature of the process. It is the purpose of this chapter to offer a statement of the problem as it presents itself to the psychologist. We shall first attempt to determine what it is that may be said to have undergone an evolution; and, secondly, the fundamental conditions which lie back of and have mediated the process.

The data of the psychology of religion, like those of the biological sciences, are highly complex. This is true of all religious phenomena, whether of civilized or savage, whether mental states or ritualistic observances. This complexity is susceptible of only one interpretation, namely, that it is the result of some sort of development. With no individual or people of to-day may we expect to find extant the truly primitive religious consciousness. Just as in the case of animal and vegetable forms, where every generation tends to be increasingly differentiated in structure and function, so with all forms of mental process, each succeeding psychic event being the resultant of all that have preceded it. Just as it is impossible that we should find among modern unicellular organisms specimens of a true eozoon, since every form of life to-day carries in its body the record of untold generations of struggle and adaptation, so in every manifestation of consciousness there is a complexity due to the mere fact that it has been preceded by other expressions of consciousness.

However, though we cannot know precisely the nature of really primitive forms, we can describe with more or less exactitude many of the factors which have tended to produce complexity of structure and function; we can often know also with some precision in what the changes have consisted. This is true, at least, on the biological side. In the case of the evolution of various aspects of psychical life, there is, however, much more difficulty in reaching a satisfactory statement, and this is partly because we do not keep clearly in mind the exact nature of that which we assume has undergone a development.

It seems necessary at the outset, then, to raise some preliminary questions as to the nature of the evolutionary process which may reasonably be presumed to lie back of religious phenomena.

To begin with, the psychologist can hardly rest satisfied with the assumption that the religious consciousness is a development from some ultimate religious instinct or perception. Such terms are usually used very loosely by students of religious phenomena. In many cases they are simply ways of saying, under the guise of science, that the religious attitude is innate, that it develops from some original sense, or elemental power. This is certainly the thought which Müller, Tiele, and Jastrow convey in their attempts to trace religion to a 'perception of the infinite.' Jastrow uses 'instinct' as interchangeable with 'perception of the infinite.' Brinton's postulate of 'a religiosity of man as a part of his psychical being' is closely akin to the 'instinct-theory' of religion.

It is only in name that such theories of religion are scientific. Evolutionary science proves almost conclusively that instincts are not original, elemental endowments, but rather products, modes of reaction, built up in the course of, and hence defi-

nitely related to, the process of organic development. They are adjustments of the organism to certain features of the physical environment that have proved of importance to it in the struggle for existence. It must be borne in mind that the fundamental thing about an instinct is that it is a mode of overt *reaction*, and that neither in its genesis nor in its functioning is there need for the assumption that any conscious process or processes are involved. If consciousness has any place in an instinctive reaction, it is only as an after-effect, or especially when the instinct, under some shift of conditions, ceases to work smoothly, or fails entirely. Consciousness, in other words, is an adjusting apparatus for remedying the deficiencies of instinct.

To hold that religion is an instinct, or that it develops from an instinct, can mean only that it is some physiological adjustment to the environment necessitated by the life-process or, possibly, that it is some conscious attitude aroused by the failure of such an adjustment to function properly. In either case, however, we are involved in a serious confusion. In no intelligible way can the religious consciousness or religious acts be thought of as directly related to the biological struggle for existence. If religion is to be called an instinct, it would certainly necessitate a new definition of instinct. As was suggested in a foregoing paragraph, however, the real thought which those writers who have described religion as an instinct have meant to convey is that religion is something original, or innate, in man. The use of the term offers, under a thin disguise of science, a point of view that is utterly opposed to all that is scientific. The scientist cannot be satisfied to regard anything as innate. His so-called ultimate data are ultimate only for the philosopher or for the non-scientific mind. The 'instinct-theory' really belongs to the philosophy rather than to the psychology of religion.

There is another 'instinct-theory,' the one proposed by Marshall,[1] which at first sight seems to be free from the difficulty suggested above. He holds that religion is an instinct developed from acts useful to the race as a whole, but often injurious to the individual, and actually performed by the individual in the face of consciously recognized self-interests. It will be seen that instinct is here conceived more scientifically than in the first cases cited, but the theory is nevertheless open to criticism. It is, for instance, incredible that an instinct should have arisen which does not and never did appeal to the individual in some way, even though it wrought him injury or pain in the end. This difficulty is not relieved by Marshall's elaborate attempt to show that an instinct-act is the reaction of the organism as a whole, while acts prompted by reason and self-interest are only partial expressions of the organism. The theory as a whole we cannot discuss here, further than to say that it is only by reading a preconceived theory into the facts that this supposition of the relationship of instinct to reason can be maintained.

The most serious difficulty, however, with Marshall's theory, as that theory at present concerns us, is of accounting for the origin of religion as a *conscious attitude*, even though it be granted that that attitude is based upon a set of instinctive physical adjustments. Marshall meets the objection by his theory that *all* nervous processes are accompanied by some measure of consciousness, and hence that an instinct-act has, of necessity, its instinct-feeling. On this basis, apparently, he would hold that the religious attitude, as a psychical complex, is gradually built up. His assumption seems to us to be entirely gratuitous. It amounts, practically, to making religious acts, together with their conscious accompaniments, hereditary, whereas observation seems to point to the conclu-

[1] H. R. Marshall, *Instinct and Reason*, New York, 1898.

sion that it is the ability to perform certain movements that is inherited, and that consciousness *accompanies* the movements only under *special* circumstances.

We ourselves shall try to show that the religious attitude has evolved from a matrix of activity of a certain kind, but we shall contend that it bears a direct functional relationship to these activities rather than that it is merely their parallelistic accompaniment. We gain nothing and explain nothing by saying that religious acts are in some way advantageous to the race, if at the same time we take for granted what is really the main problem, *i.e.* that the complicated religious consciousness is already present, provided the instinctive activities called religious are at hand. As we conceive it, the general problem is *to show how and why, given certain acts, the religious consciousness, or attitude, has been built up.* The attempt to conceive religion after the analogy of an organic instinct not only does not bring us to the main problem, it tends, even, to make us ignore it.

A further word is required regarding the theories that conceive religion as the outcome of some primitive *sense* or *perception.* Jastrow, after asserting that religion originates in man's perception of the infinite, continues: "The further question . . . how man comes to possess *power* to attain to a perception of the infinite, is one that transcends the limits of historical investigation, which is required only to answer the question of how the power is brought into action. The power itself, like the religious instinct, the emotional possibilities, the unsatisfied longings, and the intellectual phases of his nature, forms part of man's equipment, from which every science connected with man necessarily starts out. Just as anthropology assumes man to be existing and occupying the place proper to him in the universe, so historical science starts with man as a being endowed with reason, certain emotions,

and certain instincts, with the capacity of thought and the power to receive impressions on his mind." [1]

It may be granted that the above assumptions are sufficient for the history of religion, but that which Jastrow presupposes it should be the business of psychology to explain. Moreover, if psychology can show that the so-called 'perception of the infinite' has probably had a natural history and is therefore susceptible of a simpler statement, and, further, that it is not a capacity which can be placed alongside thinking as a sort of original datum, requiring only to have its varied manifestations traced out, historical science would seem to be bound to take these things into account in its treatment of the subject of religion.

Jastrow is to be criticised, not because, as a historian, he assumes a religious attitude as *his* starting-point, but because he holds that this is really the beginning of the whole matter, so far as science goes. Thus, in harmony with his theory, he maintains that there is in every man a dormant religious 'sense' which may be aroused by various circumstances of life; for example, certain practical considerations bring 'the religious emotions into play,' [2] as if they were already there and required only to be excited to activity. This sort of statement often passes for psychological; that it is not such, in any sense of the word, we shall trust to the exposition of this and the following chapters to prove. The naïve way in which psychological concepts are used in works on the science of religion is further illustrated by such statements as the following: "Granting that the earliest manifestations of the religious life are purely instinctive, still they are also

[1] Morris Jastrow, *The Study of Religion*, pp. 195 f. Cf. Tiele, *The Science of Religion*, Vol. II, p. 233: "It is man's original, unconscious, innate sense of infinity that gives rise to his first stammering utterances of that sense, and all his beautiful dreams of the past and the future."

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 277.

called forth by a recognition, however faint, of the possibility of establishing proper relations between man and the universe about him." [1] Practically everything that needs explanation is here assumed, the thought seeming to be that if one uses these psychological terms, he is giving a psychological explanation. The sentence above quoted seems to explain the origin thus: Man has an instinctive perception of the infinite and an intellectual recognition of the necessity of proper adjustment to it, and, presto! he has religion.

Conceptions of religion, such as those just criticised, suggest the need of a careful definition of the field to be investigated. The science of religion, by failing to analyze these very things, becomes trivial. We can make little progress, as was stated above, in understanding the evolution of religion, until we have a more definite notion of the exact nature of the *material* which we suppose has undergone an evolution.

Entirely aside from questions of origin, the *fact* of religion of any kind in certain individuals implies some sort of conscious states. These conscious states, whatever else they are, may be described in part at least as valuational.[2] The religious consciousness may be called a valuating attitude toward something real or imagined. By an attitude is meant an organization of various mental capacities in a definite way about certain situations, or problems of life. Attitudes are correlated with the situations, not in the sense that they are results, but simply in that a reaction to a situation necessitates such an organization of mental elements on the part of the individual. Thus, we have complex æsthetic attitudes, intellectual attitudes, scientific attitudes, attitudes toward government, whether democratic, monarchial, or socialistic; attitudes toward marriage, family life, education, and so on

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 277. [2] Höffding, *Philosophy of Religion.*

almost indefinitely; and among others of these organizations of disposition and ability to react, is the *religious attitude*. As such it involves an emotional recognition of values of some kind, an intellectual tendency to affirm or deny them, and a positive inclination to act in some way or other with reference to them. Generically, religion does not differ from many other attitudes which may also be described as valuational.

It is from the point of view of religion as a type of the valuational consciousness that we may probably find a real psychological truth in the conceptions of Müller, Tiele, and Jastrow, referred to in the preceding paragraphs. The 'perception of the infinite,' if it means anything at all, must refer to the feeling for some sort of value. Perception, as the term occurs here, is evidently not used in a psychological sense, but rather as an attitude assumed toward something felt in some way to exist or to be true. When Jastrow says that there is at least some recognition in man of the possibility of establishing proper relations between himself and the universe, he undoubtedly refers to a genuine conscious state which, as psychologists, we must regard as an aspect of this evaluating attitude. This also is evidently the meaning of the words of Tiele, quoted on a preceding page. "Why," he asks in another place, "is man discontented with his condition and surroundings?" [1] If he is dissatisfied, we should say it is probably because he has some notion of values which he has not yet fully realized. Even supposing that men have God revealed to them, why should they try to put themselves in relation to him? [2] This question suggests that religion is not merely a belief in some fact of the universe, but that it also involves appreciation and adjustment, the appreciation of values and an active attitude toward them.

There have been many attempts to find the common element

[1] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 228. [2] Cf. Tiele, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

of the various religions of the world, but with small success. The idea of a god or deity is certainly not universal, nor is there any other objective content or belief which can be found in all religions. The common element, if there is one, must rather be sought on the psychic side, in the form of some sort of attitude or disposition which can be properly called religious. An examination of all religions, whether of savage or of civilized peoples, reveals in them all an appreciative attitude toward some sort of values. These values may range from the secret names and the sacred bull-roarers of the Australians to the conception of a divine organization of the universe, demanding of every individual purity of heart, uprightness of conduct.

The feeling for worth, or value, might well be judged a primary psychic element. Perhaps it is not as primitive as mere feeling or cognition, but at any rate it is a relatively simple conscious state, the genesis and development of which can be traced with some assurance. There are, of course, many values that are not religious, and there are therefore many value attitudes which have no religious significance. One of the first problems will then be that of determining the circumstances under which religious attitudes have been *differentiated* from those other conscious states which also may be described as valuational. As far as psychology can deal with the evolution of religion, it should be its task to inquire into how the valuating attitude arose, how it developed, the causes which lead it to take this form and that; why, for instance, it is found variously stated in such terms as deities, ideals, ancestors, spirits, forces of nature, or culture-heroes. Whatever else there is about religion will be comparatively easy to explain, when we have once reached an understanding regarding its conceptions of worth.

We have rejected the theory that the religious consciousness

has evolved from some sort of innate religiosity. We may now say, further, from what we know of the development of attitudes in general, that the student of the evolution of religion is not concerned with an increase in absolute mentality of any sort, but rather with the organization of successively more complex psychic systems within a matrix of psychic capacities which have not undergone much absolute change since the first appearance of the human species. As far as mental capacity, *per se*, is concerned, the natural races of to-day are not apparently inferior to the culture races. If this is the case, it has important bearings upon the question of what sort of evolution, if any, has taken place in the religious consciousness of man.

Let us consider the question on the side of general mentality. Anthropological literature contains much material that is favorable to the view that the absolute mental status of the primitive races of to-day is comparatively high. Thus: —

"With the development of the special organs of sense, memory, and consequent ability to compare present experiences with past, with inhibition or the ability to decline to act on a stimulus, and, finally, with abstraction, or the power of separating general from particular aspects, we have a condition where the organism sits still, as it were, and picks and chooses its reactions to the outer world; and by working in certain lines, to the exclusion of others, it gains in its turn control of the environment and begins to reshape it."[1]

And further: —

"In respect to brain structure and the more important mental faculties, we find that no race is radically unlike the others."[2]

[1] W. I. Thomas, *Sex and Society*, p. 252.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 272.

The fact that the modern savage, taken in his accustomed environment, does not seem inferior to the civilized man in memory, abstraction, inhibition, mechanical ingenuity, lends plausibility to the theory that progress has been in other ways than in mere increase of mental capacity as such.

The mental capacity of different people as well as of various races may be much alike, while their actual mental activity varies widely. This is due to difference in stimulating conditions, or opportunity. It is in this respect that the civilized man differs from the savage, and it is also probably in this respect that the modern man differs most from the primitive man, after the human type of mentality was once established in him. Psychic evolution, after the first dawn of self-consciousness, has been, in other words, chiefly an evolution of situations stimulating to certain types of activity, disposition, and attitude. A man of the white race stands on a vast objective accumulation of culture, or of the products of intellect. He can do complicated things with intricate machinery because there is a complicated mechanical environment to stimulate him. He can think subtle trains of thought because there is such a thought environment, in which he may place himself if he so desires. His psychic life is a more or less direct counterpart of the organization of the world about him. As Thomas says: —

"The fundamental explanation of the difference in the mental life of two groups is not that the capacity of the brain to do work is different, but that the attention is not in the two cases stimulated and engaged along the same lines. Whenever society furnishes copies and stimulations of a certain kind, a body of knowledge, and a technique, practically all its members are able to work on the plan and scale in vogue there, and members of an alien race, who

become acquainted in a real sense with the system, can work under it. But when society does not furnish the stimulations, or when it has preconceptions which tend to inhibit the run of attention in given lines, then the individual shows no intelligence in these lines."[1]

On widely different planes of culture, the difference is not one as to the mental powers involved, the savage having the same faculties as does the civilized; the difference is rather in the direction of their use.

These considerations regarding the evolution of mentality in general may be applied directly to the development of religious attitudes. Each new generation comes into possession of a certain environment which stimulates it to particular modes of activity. An environment, social and natural, may be said to have correlated with it a certain type of mental activity, especially on the part of those who are born in it. If one generation after another continues in a given type of situation, and reacts to it in about the same way, we may be sure that the mental concomitants will continue generally the same. What is transmitted from generation to generation is, then, certain sorts of reactions or conditions which provoke such reactions. The mental states accompanying these reactions, all their emotional values, and the entire set of psychic dispositions associated therewith, may be said to be transmitted by social heredity.

We are not here concerned with the problem of why the external opportunities are greater among some peoples than among others, but rather to show that *complexity* of psychic life depends on opportunity afforded for its exercise; and further, that this complexity is not necessarily bred into the race; that is, it does not become a part of its original, or

[1] Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

instinctive nature. Given the same external environment and the same stimulating problems, each new generation, as it reacts, finds itself in possession of the attitudes and dispositions of its predecessors.

The chief problem of the evolution of religion may then be restated as that of showing how situations affording opportunity for certain types of reaction have been built up. Can there, then, be a psychology of religious development? We answer in the affirmative, because in analyzing these situations we are stating the objective conditions for the appearance of the religious attitude. Whatever may be possible in the way of an analysis of the mental attitude, *per se*, must rest ultimately upon some account of the objective conditions of its appearance. These pass on from one generation to another, and are the means of keeping alive, or of arousing, the mental concomitants.

The religious consciousness is, then, first of all an attitude rather than an instinct or a 'perception.' [1] It is an attitude toward certain values, imagined or real. It is, moreover, an attitude which may truly be said to have been gradually evolved, and yet its presence in any given individual is largely a matter of social heredity. The present writer can see no reason for assuming that any attitude or disposition, even the æsthetic or religious, has in any sense been bred into the race as an instinct. The fact that there is no material difference in the intellectual faculties of widely separate stages of culture seems to point unquestionably to the view that the seeming differences are the result of the objective accumulation of certain kinds of stimuli. If space permitted, abundant evidence could be adduced to prove that the presence or absence of these secondary forms of

[1] It is possible that those who hold that religion is an instinct would maintain that they were quite willing to call it an attitude. If so, we should probably differ, nevertheless, on the question of its origin.

consciousness, for example, the æsthetic, is, in the case of the masses of any people, dependent upon social suggestion in some form or other. This view of the matter in no sense depreciates the finer elaborations of consciousness. It simply regards them as *constructions* rather than as original traits.

We have just suggested that the religious attitude should, genetically, be regarded as a 'construct,' determined in large measure by various objective conditions of the life-process. If this is the correct view of the matter, the problem of the evolution of religion is intimately connected with the ethnology of religion. The nature of this connection we shall now try to state as accurately as may be possible. In doing so, we come to the second phase of the problem proposed in the first paragraph of the chapter, that is, as to the general conditions which have mediated the development of the religious attitude.

These general conditions have been the overt activities connected with the various phases of the life-process of primitive races. The practical and playful activities of savage races, their rituals and ceremonials of all sorts, are not merely expressions of preëxisting conscious attitudes of various kinds, they have been of primary importance in the development of those attitudes themselves. The trend of modern psychology is toward the view that an act is not merely the reflex of a psychical state, but that the psychical state is as truly the reflex of an earlier act.[1] If such is the case, the evolution of any variety of conscious attitude must be intimately connected with the accompanying overt activity of the being in question. That is to say, the overt activity is not only the index of the hidden internal states of

[1] Cf. John Dewey, "The reflex arc concept," *Psychological Review*, Vol. III, No. 3. *Vide* also James's theory of emotion, *Principles of Psychology;* and Judd, *Studies from the Yale Psychological Laboratory*, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 199 ff.

consciousness, but is also a factor of prime importance in the very production of these states.

There has been a tendency on the part of some to separate sharply the psychology of religion from the ethnology of religion and from all aspects of the history of religious practices and observances. Thus it has been held that the psychological study deals with "the feelings, the thoughts, the desires, the impulses (as far as they enter into religion), while the historical and social study deals with the results of these desires, thoughts, and feelings, when they have been transformed in a process of social consolidation and set up as *objects* of belief (doctrines, beliefs), or as modes of worship (rites and ceremonials). . . . The most important remark to be made concerning these two classes of facts is that the former owes its existence to the latter; corporate religion owes its existence to the individual religious experiences, in the same sense as a political organization owes its existence to the individuals composing it. Beliefs and ceremonials are, in a way, higher products resulting from the elemental experiences of the individual." [1] The assumption, in other words, is that religious states of mind exist first of all in the individual, and that only later do they objectify themselves in the social group. The same author says, ". . . the Psychology of Religion deals with the formative elements of corporate religion, while the History of Religion deals with the complex products." [2]

The primacy of the subjective state, as here assumed, may well be questioned. The analogy between religion with its objective manifestations and the individual and political organization is certainly fallacious.[3] The question here is not

[1] James Leuba, "Introduction to the psychology of religion," *The Monist*, Vol. XI, p. 197 (condensed).

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 197, 198.

[3] Professor Leuba has read this discussion, and states that his position was

as to whether a certain type of overt process presupposes the existence of individual agents; that, of course, goes without saying. The question is rather as to the relationship between the external act and the internal attitude. It is so evidently true in adult life that action follows thought, that it is difficult to think of the mental state as any other than primary. But as suggested earlier in this chapter, the mental state is just as truly connected with the preceding active state as it is with the activity which follows. In fact, it is through antecedent tendencies to action that mental processes of all sorts have been built up. Unquestionably, instinctive, and reflex action is more primitive than consciousness or consciously directed activity. The appearance of the latter may be taken as evidence that the reflex or instinctive equipment of the organism has proved insufficient to meet all the demands of the environment that are requisite to life. Whether we are able to state with precision all the terms in the relationship between overt mechanically controlled action and that which is consciously directed, it is certainly safe to assume that the conscious processes are truly of the nature of specializations within the primitive reactions, rendering possible the attainment of more complex results or ends. The various types of mental contents may be regarded as moments, or phases in the differentiation of the instinctive or habitual act. They stand for certain stages in the separation of the stimulus from the response, or for certain types of tension which have arisen in the simpler and, at most, not acutely conscious activities. Consequently, all such mental elements as ideas, emotions, and volitions, or whatever else we may choose to call them, are products rather than original data, a fact which must be borne in mind in all discussions involving them. That is,

taken with quite a different problem in mind. We retain the criticism, however, for the sake of bringing out our own point more clearly.

mental processes are in some way differentiations out of previous overt activity, as well as the causes of some kind of subsequent activity.[1]

In general, a complicated, intensive, active life demands and has a complicated psychic accompaniment. To see that this is true, we need only compare the amount of mental activity required by the modern captain of finance or industry with that necessary to the rustic who is far removed from the active stress of life. The circle of ideas, the comprehension of human nature, the ability to execute complicated acts, is immeasurably greater in one than in the other, and shall we doubt that the contrast is due to the difference in the situation faced by the two? If it is urged that there is very probably a native capacity in one that is not in the other, we reply that even that native capacity has been selected and enhanced by just such stimulating environments. However, if there is no difference in *mental capacity*, *per se*, there is certainly more *mentality* where there is greater opportunity for its use.

On the side of race development, it may be said that the complex mental states of the modern man, his almost unlimited powers of ideal combination and construction, his elaborate concepts and his ability to utilize them in subtle trains of thought, his desires, his judgments of worth, his feeling attitudes, varying from the simplest recognition of pleasure and pain to the appreciation of the most refined æsthetic, moral, and religious values, have been made possible by the active attitude he has assumed toward the world and his fellowmen. This active attitude, this impulse to grapple with something, is primary, while the subjective states of the individual seem to be products.

[1] For a fuller discussion of these points, with illustrations from child psychology, the reader is referred to the author's work, *The Psychology of Child Development*, 2d ed., pp. 92–105.

The principles just stated are applicable not only to the development of psychic life itself in both individual and race, but also to the more complex forms of psychic life, which we have called attitudes, or dispositions. Thus the æsthetic, the religious, the scientific, and the domestic attitudes are moments in the development of more and more complicated types of reaction. To what extent these attitudes have been bred into the race, it is impossible to say. As shown earlier in this chapter, their appearance in the individual is so intimately associated with the character of the social environment that it is entirely probable that social heredity plays a preponderating part in their appearance in succeeding generations. *The objective conditions which first produced them are passed on and each new generation thus falls into a certain mould, finds itself stimulated to certain kinds of activities.* The channels for the expression of its impulses being thus more or less predetermined, it is inevitable that the same conscious attitudes should appear as were possessed by the generation preceding it.

In view of these general principles, it may well be asked whether religious practices, which some authors, as we have seen, consign entirely to the sphere of history, have not positive psychological value. It is true that the overt practices, the rituals, as *we* see them, are to a certain extent the outcome of earlier subjective states. But that this is the case with primitive rituals is another question. The tendency to-day, among students of primitive life, is to regard all such customs as in large measure the products of a relatively unconscious evolution.[1] The customs, the rituals, the language of primal man, were definitely related to the situations and problems which touched his life. Since they are the expression in terms of human nature of these situations, may we not go further and hold that, far from being merely the expression

[1] Cf. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, pp. 52 f.

of the religious attitudes of groups of individuals, they were and are in a very genuine sense the causes and sustainers of these attitudes? In other words, the position here assumed, and which can be justified only through the entire series of chapters which follow, is this: However much it may be possible to analyze the fully developed religious consciousness in isolation, genetically it must be considered along with these objective conditions which it is related to, not as cause, but as effect.

Some such position as here taken is the logical outcome of the rejection of religion as an instinct, or as something original and innate. From such a point of view, the evolution of religion is a definite problem of social psychology, and is capable of investigation according to strictly scientific methods. To make the objective manifestations of religion positive factors in the development of the psychic state called religious, will not only render each more intelligible, but will also help to a better understanding of the relation between ancient and modern types of religion. From such a point of view we shall be led to say that there is no such thing, for instance, as a detached sense of duty, or of sin, which is applied here and there as opportunity may offer or render appropriate, but rather that these feelings represent certain crises in action, and that the character of the preceding action has been of direct importance in the determination of the character of the resulting conscious states. This is certainly true of the child's first sense of duty. Adult society furnishes the atmosphere which interprets the emotional values felt by children, and which builds up the complicated social attitudes such as are named above. To what extent could a child be taught, or have imparted to him, a sense of duty or a sense of affection or of remorse aside from contact with the real situations of life? His moral and religious sentiments are the products of, the evidences of, the ways he has reacted toward life.

In view of these things, we may define the problem of the pages which follow as that of showing how the religious consciousness has been built up, or differentiated, from a background of overt activity and relatively objective phases of consciousness. The assumption underlying the problem is that the religious attitude of mind has had a natural history, that there was a time in the history of the race when a definite religious attitude did not exist, and that, in its genesis and in its development, it has been conditioned by the same laws according to which other mental attitudes have come into being.[1]

[1] Cf. Nansen, "Religious ideas must be ascribed to the same natural laws which condition all other phenomena," *Eskimo Life*, p. 211; "Religious ideas must . . . be reckoned as a natural product of the human mind itself, under the influence of its surroundings," *ibid.*, p. 209.

CHAPTER III

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF VALUE

In the preceding chapter the religious attitude was said to be a special development of the valuating type of consciousness. If such is the case, it is evident that some preliminary inquiry into the origin and development of the value-consciousness, in general, should accompany a study of religious origins.

The appreciative or valuating attitude of mind may, with some justice, be held to be a relatively primary form of conscious process. The world does not present itself first of all to us as a mass of objective facts, with little or no relation to ourselves and the things we may be striving to do. It is rather as a world of values and interests that it is first apprehended; the world of cold fact is an abstraction from this earlier and more primitive aspect of things and events. That is to say, what we call, for want of a better term, the appreciative attitude [1] is directly connected with man's active relation to his environment, both physical and social. The values which we recognize, the appreciations which we feel, are built up in us by the way we take hold of our world and deal with it. The things that interest us, the acts that we approve or disapprove, the ends, or goals, of action such as we come to regard as worth while, find their way into our conscious experience because we are most of the time striving to *do* something. It is in this way that they establish their relationship

[1] We do not, in this discussion, attempt to differentiate the value-judgment, a logical process, from the more immediate type of consciousness found in value-appreciation. We are not here concerned with a problem of psychological analysis, and we may therefore use the term appreciative or valuational attitude, meaning by it a psychic complex which includes the different aspects of the apprehension of value in their functional, organic relationship.

to us. At some later time these objects, acts, and ideals may become so familiar that they may be cognized, relatively at least, independently of our purposes or doings.

The world for most of us, then, whether we are civilized adults, children, or primitive savages, is a body of more or less organized interests and values, which has grown up and acquired definite form out of the instinctive and impulsive substrate of our conscious life. The method by which these attitudes of interest and appreciation have developed from this substratum of activity, and the place of these activities in rendering valuations permanent, form a problem which requires further inquiry and illustration.

We have said that *acts* of some sort precede a consciousness of value in a given direction, and that these acts are, to start with, mere instinctive and impulsive movements. These movements, in and of themselves, involve little or no consciousness, and a person whose behavior rests exclusively upon this plane can hardly be said to be interested in what he is doing nor to valuate or appreciate the things with which he may come in contact. What he does, he does unconsciously or with a low degree of consciousness. From this simplest type of behavior there are all gradations of removal. At the lower extreme, the stimulus of the moment gains its immediate and direct response; at the other extreme, the response to the stimulus is long deferred, and many intermediate acts are performed before the end can be realized. This delay in reaching the end and the consequent appearance of various preliminary activities are the elementary conditions which make a consciousness of value possible.[1]

[1] We do not ignore the social factor in the valuational consciousness. It is of the greatest importance, but we shall reserve it for treatment in another connection. Here we wish to confine ourselves to the connections which subsist between appreciation and action, or, more specifically, action as it appears in social customs.

The mere partaking of the utilities of life, the use of clothing and shelter, of fire and weapons, whether by individuals or by social groups, does not insure the presence of such a consciousness.[1] In a very general sense, of course, it is true that everything which attracts attention may be the subject of a value-judgment;[2] such things may excite desire or aversion, may be felt to be either good or bad. But, we repeat, it is only as the individual begins to organize himself about these objects of attention, only as they become the focus of his habits, can their full significance become explicit for him. The mere inability to attain immediately a wished-for goal tends to isolate it in a peculiar way and bring it to the focus of attention. The steps necessary to the attainment also tend to stand out and are recognized as having value with reference to the desired end. The fundamental point, however, is that the greater the number of things which a person does with reference to an object of attention, the more completely the significance of that object develops for him. This is true whether the acts are organically related to the object, or whether they are connected with it by mere chance association.

Let us try to determine the main conditions under which activity develops from the primitive unconscious type into all the manifold forms which prevail even in savage society. The general situation is thus described by Dewey: "With civilized man all sorts of intermediate terms come in between the stimulus and the overt act, and between the overt act and the final satisfaction. Man no longer defines his

[1] *Vide* Giddings, *Principles of Sociology*, pp. 40 f., 240, for an apparently opposite view.

[2] Höffding, *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 139, "It attracts attention and is therefore involuntarily associated with what is about to happen, with the possibility of attaining the desired end." Reference here is to choice of fetich object.

end to be the final satisfaction of hunger as such. It is so complicated and loaded with all kinds of technical activities, associations, deliberations, and social divisions of labor, that conscious attention and interest are in the process and its content. Even in the crudest agriculture, means are developed to the point where they demand attention on their own account, and control the formation and use of habits to such an extent that they are the central interests, while the food process and enjoyment as such is incidental and occasional." [1]

The connection between primitive religious practices and these complications of direct action which cluster about the economic utilities of life has often been indicated. Thus W. R. Smith [2] and G. A. Barton [3] have shown rather fully that many of the rituals and practices of the primitive Semites were the development of food activities centring about the care of flocks and the culture of the date palm. Other primitive religions abound in illustrations of the same sort.[4] The significance of these facts has, however, never been fully pointed out. It is not merely true that many religious practices take their form and content from the economic problems of a people, or, to state the matter more generally, from the situations of every kind which attract their attention; we may even say that the very religious values have thus arisen and developed. In other words, the religious consciousness itself is organically related to the development of intermediate adjustments between the stimulus to activity and the end toward which it is directed. To the question of how these have arisen we shall now turn our attention.

[1] John Dewey, "The interpretation of savage mind," *The Psychological Review*, Vol. IX, p. 221.

[2] *The Religion of the Semites.*

[3] *Semitic Origins.*

[4] Miss M. Morris, in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vols. 24, p. 394 and 26, p. 165, has collected many interesting illustrations of this fact.

It may seem that it is almost impossible to discover any order or method in the differentiation of simple reactions into the complicated forms of activity characteristic of all human society, whatever the stage of culture. Perhaps the most general cause of change from the simple to the complex has been the necessity of adapting means to ends. If we take this in a broad sense, it will cover a great many types of differentiation. However, there are always operative other methods of differentiation of a simpler character, which are also capable of producing important psychical results.[1] Thus it is possible that a large number of the complicated customs of both civilized and savage (more especially of the latter), have accumulated entirely unconsciously and may be said to be analogous to the variations which appear in physical organisms from generation to generation. Just as variations of this kind are preserved through physical heredity, in like manner slight and unconscious changes in human action may accumulate and be transmitted by imitation and social heredity. An individual or a group of individuals, more or less by chance, may do something in a different or partially different way, and it is possible that this variation may be preserved in the group without any very definite thought about it. The facts revealed by the psychology of unconscious suggestion seem to make this entirely possible. In many cases, the direct reactions of the life-process have been centres for the accumulation of the merest chance associations. Thus, a purely accidental thing, done during a hunt, might be repeated through unconscious suggestion. Moreover, if the hunt were successful, this particular act might be regarded as one of the causes of the success, so that

[1] Cf. the following discussion with Sumner, N. G., *Folkways*, 1906, pp. 6, 7. According to him, customs are based on practical efforts to satisfy needs and interests combined with belief in 'luck.' On the concept of 'luck,' see the chapter entitled "The Mysterious Power," *infra*, pp. 163, 164.

its recurrence through habit would be reënforced by various emotional states and by the conception of the relation of means and end. Other individuals, another tribe, or the next generation, might take it up simply as the *way* a particular thing should be done. This is perhaps the simplest way that primitive types of reaction could become complicated. The development of memory, of the capacity to imitate, and of a nervous system liable to become fixed in habitual modes of reaction would almost inevitably result in just such a semi-mechanical accumulation of customs about the more direct activities of life. The importance of this type of variation for human progress is not at first obvious, and yet it is in accord with the course of human events as recorded by history. Thus Thomas says: "It is a notorious fact that the course of human history has been largely without prevision or direction. Things have drifted and forces have arisen. Under these conditions an unusual incident — the emergence of a great mind, or a forcible personality, or the operation of influences as subtle as those which determine fashions in dress — may establish social habits and copies which will give a distinct character to the modes of attention and the mental life of a group."[1]

Some of the customs of the Malays may be used to illustrate the discussion which precedes and that which is to follow. They are the remnants of primitive Malay life and modes of thought which have persisted merely as customs through several overlying alien religions. We shall look at them, not as examples of religion or of magic, though they are susceptible of examination from these points of view, but simply as types of intermediate activities. The fishing, hunting, and mining taboos seem to be good illustrations of this simplest class. For instance, when a man is engaged in these pursuits, he may use

[1] *Sex and Society*, pp. 287 f.

only certain words, or he must abstain from the use of other words. Certain articles, such as umbrellas, boots, and sarongs (Malay coats), must not be worn or taken to the fishing stakes.[1] Similar taboos affect the mining of tin, and there are such additional prohibitions as these: raw cotton must not be brought into a mine in any shape, black coats must not be worn; so also the gourds used by the Malays as water vessels, all sorts of earthenware, glass, limes, lemons, and the outer husk of the cocoanut, are prohibited articles.[2] Scores of similar taboos and restrictions, affecting almost every detail of the life of these people, are mentioned by Skeat.

While it would be presumptuous to class them all dogmatically under the same heading, one can hardly doubt that, among the almost inconceivably large number of such regulations found among all the natural races, if not also among ourselves, many must have arisen without any prevision and have been perpetuated through association. Man is a variable quantity even without his intellect, and it is thus more than probable that innumerable variations in procedure will occur in any simple activity, and that many of these will be preserved through the influence of habit. In the cases referred to it may be that the people who first worked the mines did not use or know of the articles mentioned above. When at a later time another group of people tried its hand at mining, it probably imitated in every detail the life of its successful predecessors. (Just as imitations of the personal habits of the successful Japanese were popular in America during the war with Russia.) Or, it may be, a party of miners would be successful when it chanced not to have these articles. Such a coincidence would alone be sufficient to start a custom of the sort we have mentioned.

[1] Skeat, *Malay Magic*, London and New York, 1900, p. 315.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 257.

The great amount of detail in the habits which thus cluster about a simple economic activity can be best appreciated by the citing of one case in some detail. The wild pigeon among the Malays is properly snared as follows:[1] First a conical hut of certain dimensions is built in a carefully selected spot in the jungle. It must be built strong, for the hunter may be visited by a tiger. "In front of the hut, that is to say, on the side away from the door, if you want to proceed in the orthodox way, you will have to clear a small rectangular space, and put up round it on three sides a low railing consisting of a single bar about eighteen inches from the ground. This is to rail off what is called 'King Solomon's Palace-yard,' and will also be useful from a practical point of view, as it will serve as a perch for your decoy." Next the active influence of evil spirits must be neutralized by a rice ceremony, . . . "first in the centre of the enclosed space, and then in each corner successively, beating each of the forked sticks at the corners with a bunch of leaves. The decoy tube is then taken and an appropriate charm recited, after which is sounded a long-drawn note in each corner, the mouth end is inserted in the hut through a hole in the thatch, while the heavy outer end is supported upon a forked upright stick. Then follows the placing of the decoy bird and the snaring of the wild birds as they alight in the enclosure."

The following charms are used (specimens):—

"When about to start to decoy the pigeons, say:—

It is not I who am setting out,
It is 'Toh Bujang Sibor (the solitary scooper) who is setting out.

Then sound the decoy tube thrice loudly, and say:—

[1] *Ibid.*

I pray that they may come in procession, come in succession,
To enter into this bundle of ours."

On reaching the hut, another charm may be repeated, or one may "take the (leaves of) a branch of a tree as high as one's head, also from one which is as high as the waist, the same from one as high as the knee, and the same from a tree as high as the ankle joint. These are to be made into a bunch and used to flick the outside of the hut while saying these lines: —

> 'Dok Ding (stands for the) 'Do'ding Pigeon,
> Which makes three with the Madukara Pigeon,
> The twig breaks, the twig is pressed down,
> And our immemorial customs are restored.'"

There are other charms to speak when scattering the rice, when sprinkling the rice paste, when sounding the call in the midst of the enclosure, when about to enter the hut, when the hunter has entered, but before he has seated himself, when he is about to sound the decoy tube, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

Some of the details of this process are clearly practical, as that the hut should be used before the leaves are withered, since it is of course less suspicious if fresh. So with the decoy bird. Some of the arrangements are meant to be practical, but from our point of view they are entirely aside from any such use; for example, the various charms used are thought to deceive the birds and to induce them to enter the trap. Others of the details, for example, the shape of the hut and the specifications for the enclosure without, may be simply the perpetuation of the chance ways in which the pigeons were first hunted, but now they are regarded as absolutely essential to success in the hunt.

The mere performance of these endless details serves to

intensify the suspense, which naturally precedes the attainment of the goal, and serves to render the goal of more striking importance. Do we not all feel that that which we have obtained through a long succession of preliminary acts is somehow worth more than what comes more immediately and with less effort? We hold, then, in general, that on the psychical side the outcome of these almost mechanical developments of simple life-processes would be an appearance of a more pronounced valuation of them. Even if this were *not* the case, the presence of these clustering habits would furnish a basis for a very definite value-consciousness in case the opportunity to satisfy the impulse or to reach the goal were temporarily or permanently removed. It is probable that the resulting sense of the worth of the goal would be in direct proportion to the number of habits organized about its attainment.

Another way in which intermediate activities arise is through the conscious and hence definite attempt of individuals to secure more complete satisfaction of impulses, or a better attainment of some purpose. The development of the higher mental processes makes it possible for man to attempt new adjustments when the instinctive responses do not bring their accustomed satisfaction. Problematic situations may be reflected upon and various devices brought to bear for the attainment of results which, for the time being, are uncertain. In other cases, the aim of the adjustments will be to make more certain the satisfactions which experience proves may sometimes fail one. This capacity to reflect and to adjust means to ends is of course the basis of all invention and progress. It is to be noted, however, that the first attempts to meet the needs of a practical difficulty are necessarily extremely crude. It is more than likely that the real reason for the failure of an act to attain its satisfaction would not be correctly

estimated by the primitive mind; indeed, the modern mind by no means always sees such things correctly. Hence the means selected to meet the difficulty are often, in our eyes, irrelevant to the matter in hand and, at best, somewhat roundabout. But whatever their value, they are, nevertheless, intermediate adjustments. They may take the form of tricks, of attempts to propitiate spirits such as prayers, sacrifices, and all sorts of complicated but useless ceremonials. The illustration given above of the snaring of the wild pigeon contains many instances of acts which have originated in this way. As it is impossible to be sure that any particular act is entirely representative of this or that type of differentiation, we had best rest with the simple hypothesis that in various ways activity tends inevitably to become complex. Further illustrations will, therefore, be deferred for the present.

We have shown that activity may become complicated, first, by chance associations, and second, by efforts to adjust means to ends. There is still a third way which is also dependent upon association. Thus, if a desired object is for the time being unattainable, the very fact of its postponement will bring it the more vividly to consciousness. If, then, anything is present, in some degree associated with the end, it also tends to become an object of attention, and upon it the pent-up impulse to act may find a vent. Thus, if a man desires to kill an enemy, and cannot at the moment find opportunity, he may vent himself on something belonging to the enemy, or he might even find a satisfaction in perpetrating on a crude image what he wishes to do eventually to the enemy himself. It may be said, in general, that when the satisfaction is in any way delayed, the inhibited impulse tends to find expression in many acts associated with the final act, or suggested by it. Such types of reaction appear strikingly in sympathetic magic, although they are common to a far wider circle of

activities. Such subsidiary acts, while not causally connected with the primary object of attention, serve the apparently important purpose of suggesting it, keeping it in mind, and standing for it emotionally. Acts thus associated with an object and sharing its emotional values are easily regarded as having some actual connection with it, and hence may be taken as a part of the means of attaining that object, or even as a substitute for it. In this way all sorts of acts, imitative of the reality, originate and develop. The taking of the sacraments and baptism in the Christian churches is an excellent illustration. The Australian custom of seeking to bring injury to enemies by pointing charmed sticks at them is doubtless of the same category. The enemy is not attacked *directly*, but in this *reduced* and *imitative* way. Such a method of attack is devoid of the danger of a direct encounter, but has more of its emotional values. It probably originated in a rehearsal of the combat, when for any reason that combat was delayed, and since it was found to have the same or greater emotional results, it was conceived to have the same external effects as the actual combat.

The rehearsal of a prospective fight is an actual fact among primitive peoples,[1] and the cause of such a procedure must, first of all, be due to the tendency of the pent-up impulse to find expression in some associated or similar activity. The association in thought and the emotional similarity are all that are required to lead to the belief that they are genuinely connected in the external world.[2]

There are naturally many variations of this type of action, but in every case they seem to depend for their significance

[1] Cf. Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, Chap. XVIII, for an extensive account of such a procedure.

[2] Cf. the foregoing account of the origin of customs with that given by Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, 1908, pp. 52 f.

upon associations first brought to consciousness by the necessity of deferring response to the original stimulus. The following illustrations will serve to render the point still clearer. On the west coast of Africa the negroes, "in passing through a country where leopards and lions abound, carefully provide themselves with the claws, teeth, lips, and whiskers of those animals, and hang them around their necks to secure themselves against being attacked."[1] Here the anticipation of the conflict is manifestly the controlling factor in the determination of this supplementary act. In the following complicated fishing ceremony from West Africa, we may discern various types of intermediate acts, but those last described are certainly predominant. A concoction is first prepared, the ingredients of which have been collected with the greatest care. After this a number of different things, all of which involve much emotional stress, are to be done. Thus, "while the mess is boiling, (you must) sit by, face over the pot, in the steam rising from it, and speak into the pot, 'Let me catch fish every day! every day!' No people are to be present or to see any of these proceedings. Take the pot off the fire, not with your hands but by your feet, and set it on the ground." After the fisherman has eaten, he calls a dog to finish the refuse. "As the dog begins to eat, strike it sharply, and as the animal runs away howling, say, 'So, may I strike the fish!' Then kick the pot over. . . . Leave the pot lying as it is until night; then, unseen, take it into the village street, and violently dash it to pieces on the ground, saying, 'So may I kill fish!' It is expected that the villagers shall not hear the sound of the breaking of the vessel, for it must be done only when they are believed to be asleep."[2] The performance of these some-

[1] Quoted in Nassau's *Fetichism in West Africa*. New York, 1904, pp. 83, 84.

[2] Nassau, *op. cit.*, pp. 187 f.

what difficult things in entire secrecy inevitably involves the doer in an emotional strain which intensifies his appreciation of the final act of fishing itself. Much of this ceremony seems to reflect dimly a rehearsal of the conflict, that is, it is a series of acts which arose in the first place as an outlet for a checked direct activity. The result was a series of emotional states which were associated with the ultimate practical act, and came to stand for it in consciousness. They represent to the performer the significance, or the value, of that act.

One or two more illustrations from the Malays may yet be given. Deer-catching is one of the Malay's most delightful pastimes. When the deer have been tracked to their hiding-place, "all the young men of the village assemble, and the following ceremony is performed before they sally out on the expedition. Six or eight coils of rattan rope, about an inch in diameter, are placed on a triangle formed with three rice-pounders, and the oldest in the company, usually an experienced sportsman, places a cocoanut shell filled with burning incense in the centre, and taking the sprigs of three [particular] bushes he walks mysteriously around the coils, beating them with the sprigs, and erewhile muttering some gibberish. . . . During this ceremony the youths of the village look on with becoming gravity and admiration. It is believed that the absence of this ceremony would render the expedition unsuccessful; the deer would prove too strong for the ropes, and the wood demons frustrate their sport by placing insurmountable obstacles in their way." [1] Here, again, the rehearsal of the combat has developed into a ceremony, a series of intermediate acts, which serve to heighten the hunters' consciousness of the values in the sport. There are present the feelings of suspense, the exacting preparations for the ceremony, the subordination of the young men to an older one,

[1] Skeat, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

the mysterious and unintelligible performances, — all of which tend to make the deer-catch a matter of some moment, that is, a valuated act.

In our account of the development of custom, we must not omit the influence of the play impulse as manifested both in the workings of idle fancy and in various physical movements. On no plane of culture, whether civilized or savage, can all acts be prompted solely by serious ends. In the case of the majority of people there must be times of relaxation when impulse spontaneously overflows, sometimes in physical movements and sometimes in creations of the fancy. The universality of play is the best evidence that we are fundamentally active creatures, the best evidence that our ideas, purposes, values, appreciations are constructions from this exuberance of instinctive and impulsive modes of behavior. The play-impulse accounts for much of the complication of primitive custom, and it also contributes largely to the development and perpetuation of many customs having a serious origin. Initiation rites, marriage customs, dances, festivals, and religious ceremonies furnish abundant illustration of this fact. Thus, to take a single illustration, dances at the time of the full moon may outwardly have some religious or magical significance, but, in their beginnings, they may have been quite natural overflowings of animal spirits in mere play. Such dancing, among the Bushmen, according to Stow,[1] is clearly play, stimulated by the almost daylight brightness of the warm South African nights. This suggests that ritualistic dances among other peoples may have been originally a manifestation of mere playfulness. The element of play in the religion of the early Hebrews is brought out clearly in many of the denunciations of the prophets. In the case of primitive religious ceremonies, it is naturally impossible

[1] *The Native Races of South Africa*, pp. 111 f.

to tell just what has originated in pure sportiveness and what points back to some serious purpose. Without doubt, however, playfulness has exerted an influence, even if it is not a determinable quantity. Many peculiar aspects of primitive custom, which have puzzled anthropologists, and to which they have brought far-fetched interpretations, can no doubt be explained in this way.

But the chief point here is that the play impulse is instrumental both in the origin and the continuance of many customs and ceremonials. In this impulse we may therefore find, in part, the antecedents of the general valuating consciousness.

It is not our purpose here to do more than illustrate the way in which the direct activities of the life-process have tended to differentiate about centres of attention, and to suggest that this development, on the active side, seems to mediate a more pronounced conscious valuation of the original act or thing. These preliminary activities of necessity come more vividly to consciousness than do the simpler reactions. There is no need for a conscious process as long as the response accomplishes its purpose without friction. But when there is friction, there is also reflection over the resources and an attempt to estimate their worth with reference to the desired end. By the interruption of the direct act, its goal is realized for the first time as of vital importance, and the means used to attain it gain a corresponding emotional value. In so far as they are recognized as related to an important end, they receive its valuation. It is important to note that only as these preliminary or mediating activities arise is the value of the end realized. They serve in a way to *analyze* the end, to bring to consciousness its implications. Hence it can be said that the value of the end is first completely realized when it is analyzed out into a set of preliminary acts through which it can be ideally represented. The valuated end does not, then, first exist

and reflect its worthfulness upon the means. The means are rather vital elements in the very production of the value.

It will be seen that the illustrations given are of acts which would hardly be called religious. They are merely complications of the simple life-activities, and it was noted that they served to mediate valuational states of consciousness. Religious practices, as we shall see, are of the same species as these here discussed, their distinguishing trait being that they possess a higher development of the valuational accompaniment.

Summarizing the discussion up to this point, we may say that the consciousness of value seems to be closely associated with, if not conditioned by, the development of active processes. Among these are included all complications of activity, whether due to chance variations, accumulated mechanically, or to conscious adaptations to situations of stress or conflict. It is natural that these latter should be most productive of intermediate types of action because of the great demand they make upon the instinctive and impulsive nature. Moreover, the wide variety of situations of conflict and struggle which mankind as a whole has had to face has served to develop the valuational consciousness on the broadest lines.

Among some peoples the obtaining of food is nearly always preceded by the hunt, which is a prolific source of value attitudes. If the supply of food is quite precarious and uncertain, as with the Central Australians or the primitive Semites, on account of the barrenness of the countries, the conflicts will not always be with animals, but with adverse natural conditions, such as lack of water and vegetation. Among other races the food problem is hardly present, as in the case of the negroes of the west coast of Africa, described by Ellis.[1] Hence among them we find the objects of attention and con-

[1] *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast.* See also Mary Kingsley, *West African Studies*, p. 124.

flict are the forces of nature, disease, dangerous rivers, lakes, marshes, the sea, the great tropical trees from which dead branches may fall, or which may fall themselves without warning upon the unwary black passing beneath. All these are serious objects of attention to the native, as is proved by his attempts to adjust himself to them. His gods are personifications of the values these situations have for him. A god of fertility would have no meaning for him, because he has not come to consciousness of the significance of fertility. A deep pool of water, however, in which a man has been drowned, a dark ravine, or a gloomy recess in the forest are all objects to him of respectful attention, because in connection with them he finds that this direct, spontaneous activity is inhibited, and that he is under the necessity of conducting himself with circumspection.

The accumulation of mediating activities about striking places and objects is one of the first steps in the development of the concept of sacred places and sacred objects. The Hudson Bay Eskimo salute dangerous rocks or capes on passing them. In this act we have a simple modification of activity, scarcely religious, and yet easily capable of becoming such, when the place toward which it is directed would become a sacred locality. The sacred places of the Central Australians are the secret repositories of their *Churinga*, or sacred objects, and we can scarcely doubt that their awe of these places is enhanced if not created by the ceremonies clustering about them, and that the ceremonies themselves are developments, in the ways suggested above, from some simple activities of the life-process.

If what we have to deal with were mere unconscious habit, there would seem to be small chance for the appearance of an attitude of consciousness as refined as the sense of value. But it should be noted that habits are not of necessity uncon-

scious. The habits of adjustment developed by acute or problematic situations may have quite definite conscious accompaniments. Even if consciousness lapses, the physical adjustments form a continuous background from which it is possible for the conscious states to be easily reëxcited. It should also be borne in mind that these activities furnish an avenue for social intercourse and social expression in a way that less habitual activities do not. In this way they become the basis of many emotional values which have little or no connection with the original object of the acts. In other words, the mediating activities themselves may become the objects of a valuating consciousness, their original meaning being either lost or never known. Thus, as Nassau tells us, the negroes of West Africa often attend the tribal ceremonies purely for the sake of the excitement, having no knowledge whatever of the meaning of the performances. So also with the Mountain Chant of the Navaho, the ceremonies of which are ostensibly for the curing of the diseased, although the Indians really meet that they may have a jolly social time together.

In many cases the mere isolation of the overt act serves to enhance its emotional accompaniment. In this way it may occur that the value attitudes developed on lower planes of culture are generalized and given an objective significance in accord with the more advanced state of culture. It was thus that the prophets of Israel generalized their deeper religious conceptions from the primitive conceptions of worth inherited from the early Semitic peoples.

We have thus far been concerned simply to show the connection of the value-consciousness with the overt expressions of the life-process. The next problem, that of the first steps in the development of the religious attitude, is chiefly that of determining the sorts of situations which tend to intensify the sense of worth and render it of more than transient duration.

CHAPTER IV

THE GENESIS OF THE RELIGIOUS ATTITUDE

The religious consciousness, as has been said, is a special development of valuational attitudes. The problem now before us is that of determining how this specialization has been accomplished. It is the problem of the origin of religion, as far as psychological science is concerned.

We may start with the hypothesis that the social body has been at least an important factor in this process. There are certainly many things which will readily come to mind as favorable to such a preliminary conception. Many of our highest valuations are distinctly dependent upon a social context for even their present significance. The sentiments of love and duty, the notion of sin and of right, have no meaning except in terms of either an actual or an ideal social order. We may well inquire, then, whether these higher valuations of conduct, and even the so-called highest religious conceptions, those of God, freedom, and immortality, do not owe their existence to the influence of the social group upon the simpler values, the origin of which has been sketched in the preceding chapter.

It should be scarcely necessary to remind the reader at this point that the inquiry here proposed does not in the least impugn the significance of the religious attitude. We are merely seeking to determine the natural history of certain facts. If our highest values have developed in a social atmosphere, it means that these values are an organic part of the universe of which human society is also a constituent. If the intercourse of man with man has, under favoring

conditions, been instrumental in creating within him lofty conceptions and noble purposes, we can only feel a deeper confidence in the nature of things, *whatever* that nature may be. It is the purpose of this study to seek for relationship where disconnection has often, hitherto, been assumed.

It is, indeed, well recognized, but in a general way, that the atmosphere of the social group is an important stimulus to the development of almost every human characteristic. It is difficult to conceive of the development of language and of art, or of the accumulation and organization of knowledge outside of a social environment. It is to the same source that we should doubtless look for the development of the finer emotional attitudes. What do we not owe to one another in the development of our sense of beauty, of loveliness, and of moral greatness? While we may experience the emotions of fear or of anger toward the forms of life beneath ourselves and even toward the inanimate world, it is significant to note that primitive man, — if we may judge from the natural races of to-day, — when he experienced these emotions, often conceived of them as directed toward conscious beings like himself. The sense of value itself is so thoroughly bound up with social activities that it may almost be called a social category.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze this somewhat vague conception of the importance of social intercourse in the formation of human nature in the hope of formulating it more definitely. It will be recalled that in an earlier chapter (Chap. II) we pointed to the fact that mental attitudes develop in intimate connection with overt processes, that the psychical state is as much the *result* of physical activity as it is the *cause* of further action. As was previously stated, the mental process stands for a crisis of some kind which has arisen in the overt chain of events. Whenever it is con-

sidered in itself, it must be thought of as an abstraction from this objective sequence. Now if the activities most likely to give rise to a valuational attitude are those in which many may share, if the crises are crises of the group rather than of the individual, the resulting mental attitudes would certainly be social. Tufts has advanced the theory that the æsthetic consciousness is in this way a social product, arising out of such group activities as the dance, the festival, and other social performances which were originally the expression of practical attitudes called forth by the necessities of the life-process. In other words, that we have in these activities the causes and not the results of certain states of consciousness.[1] More than this, it is seen that the acts are of a definitely social character, so that the æsthetic development of the value-consciousness is the product of social intercourse. On reflection it seems quite evident that such is the case. It is certainly true that the attitude of appreciation follows rather than precedes the act to which it refers, and if the act is one performed by a social group, if it is, in fact, possible only through social coöperation, as in the case of dance or festival, the æsthetic consciousness is clearly conditioned by the preëxisting social body. That the context of activity out of which all the more permanent and far-reaching values have arisen is essentially social, and therefore that religion, as an aspect of the value-consciousness, is a product of social intercourse, we shall now try to show.

[1] "Art has not arisen primarily to satisfy an already existing love of beauty. It has arisen chiefly, if not wholly, from other springs, and has itself created the sense by which it is enjoyed." "The dance before the chase or battle, the mimes at agriculture festivals, or at initiation ceremonies, which seem to the uninstructed onlooker crude forms of art, are to the mind of the actors entirely serious. They give success in the real activities which follow these symbolic acts. They bring the rain or sunshine or returning spring." "On the genesis of the æsthetic categories," *The University of Chicago Decennial Publications*, Vol. III, Part 2, p. 5.

The general notion of worth, as has been pointed out, appears, first of all, when the appropriate response to a stimulus is not immediately forthcoming, and the individual is side-tracked into a lot of intermediate, or preliminary, activities. The presence of an evaluating attitude means, primarily, that in some way the direct outgo of activity has been checked. In the case of primitive man, the most acutely felt inhibitions were certainly those which affected the group as a whole. The occasions of strain which were permanent enough to become fixed in mind were doubtless those of food and defence, and in these the entire group would be concerned. The crises felt by the individual only would be, in most cases, subsidiary to these primary necessities in which all were interested. They would therefore be more transient and less able to afford a basis for the building up of a definite sense of worth. The desires of the individual vary; from purely physical causes his attitudes toward many things are easily subject to even hourly changes. If, however, of the values of which he is conscious at a given time, some are shared with others, to these values he is very likely to come back, even though his appreciation of them may lapse from time to time. Their presence in the minds of others is a constant reminder to him of their existence and a constant stimulus to him to recover them for himself. More than this, whatever has had more than a passing interest for him has almost always turned out to be of concern to others as well as to himself.

So completely is this true, that the primitive man can hardly have been definitely conscious of values which were not supported and shared by the group of which he was a part. A direct result of such a condition would be a vague, indefinite sense of his own personality. The group itself will not be analyzed, but will be conceived in the gross, as the universe in which he moves and has his being, as, in fact, identical with

himself. This indefinite sense of personality is well illustrated by the system of relationship current among many Australian tribes. The notion of wife, mother, father, brother, and sister are not clearly differentiated from a rather extended group of relatives. Thus the term brother applies not only to the blood brother, but also to all males born from a certain group of men and women. This is not because the Australian is in doubt as to his blood relationship, but because his own sense of personality is so vague that he conceives vaguely those about him. He apparently thinks chiefly of groups rather than of individuals. The fact, also, that among many primitive types at the present day the sense of personal property is quite limited is an indication of the subordination of the individual's sense of worth to that of the group. Thus, among the Greenland Eskimo[1] the essential and general utilities of food and shelter can scarcely be said to be limited by private ownership, They are values in which the consciousness of the whole has so identified itself that they are social through and through. There is no chance for the individual to feel them as his own.

The point, thus far, is that the primitive man's greatest values, his highest conceptions of worth, are apparently distinctly social matters, and hence must be the product of social activities, particularly those which cluster about the problems and crises which affect the group as a whole.

A further illustration of this fact we take from W. Robertson Smith.[2] The primitive Semites thought of their gods as caring only for the tribe and not for the individual. The sorrows of the latter were out of place in the religious life of the

[1] Nansen, *Eskimo Life;* cf. Boas, "The central Eskimo," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology.*

[2] *The Religion of the Semites,* pp. 244 ff. Cf. also Mockler-Ferryman, *British Nigeria,* p. 230, "The individual is sunk in the family, village, or tribe; and among most tribes the land is held by families in common."

many. Individual grievances and wants could not expect attention of the deity. Under such a conception, it may be taken as a general rule that whatever is of permanent value will inevitably be associated with tribal life and tribal problems. Individual concerns, having no recognition from others, would be forgotten as the mood of their possessor shifted. On the other hand, that reënforcement which one's sense of worth gains by the agreement of other minds is certainly of the greatest importance. The fact that some values are so reenforced and others not so augmented would serve to scale them off with very little reference to their intrinsic appeal to the individual as such. We may safely conclude, then, that the primitive man could scarcely think of a permanent and abiding value except in terms of his group. The group endures while he changes. It is the symbol to him of permanence; it is the universe in which he moves, and with which he is familiar.

That the social organization is practically the universe, the *ne plus ultra* of the primitive man's life, is a most important point for the development of religious values out of those of less degree. As we shall try to show, the social body not only is an agent in enhancing and rendering permanent the simple values brought to consciousness by the growth of intermediate activities, it also raises them to the highest power. Psychologically, the values of the group are not only higher than those of the individual, they are genuinely ultimate and universal. This is our argument in a nutshell, and we can do no more in the pages which follow than illustrate it a little further.

That the tribe is more or less the primitive man's universe is illustrated by his tendency to incorporate within it all that is friendly and important to his own and his fellows' welfare. The ties which bind together the group are those of kinship.

In a group of kin are learned the first notions of friendship and coöperation. It would thus be difficult for a savage to conceive of anything which appeared to be friendly to him as otherwise than in some manner of his kindred. Thus animals and plants which are found to be of importance to the group are included within it, and as such belong to its kinship. There are no doubt some groups in which the notion of relationship is not prominent, and to them the points of this paragraph would hardly apply. We merely wish to emphasize at this point that where values *are* conceived in terms of kinship they are social values.

The blood bond has, however, been so universally recognized that it may well be taken as a causal agency of the greatest importance in the development of the value-consciousness. Through its medium the social body has produced many of our ethical and religious conceptions. We need only instance the Christian conceptions of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; and also that well-nigh all the essential Christian doctrines bear in some form the stamp of a social structure in which the appeal to the motive of kindred was of the strongest and of the most convincing character. Note, for example, also, the teaching of Jesus, which starts with the conception of neighborliness, brotherly love, and the like.

In the social group, in which the consciousness of kindred is strong, the acts in which kindred participate become themselves of importance, and in fact serve to bring out more clearly the values implicit in kinship itself. Thus, with reference to the ancient Semitic peoples, W. Robertson Smith says:[1] "The act of eating and drinking together is the solemn and stated expression of the fact that all those who share the meal are brethren and . . . all the duties of friendship and brotherhood are acknowledged in their common act." Probably

[1] *The Religion of the Semites*, p. 247.

no other social act has been more productive of the higher conceptions of worth.

The point is, then, that whatever development the valuational attitude undergoes, it will probably be mediated by and stated in terms of the social atmosphere in which it originates. The attitude is the reflex in consciousness of certain complexities in social activity. The particular function of the social element is, as we have pointed out, in giving stability and depth to the values brought to consciousness through the rise of intermediate activities. If this is true, the form of social structure will have much influence upon the character of the conceptions of worth which arise within it. Thus, a loose social structure will be productive of vague, uncertain values. This appears to be the case with some of the West African tribes in which fetichism prevails. Nassau holds that all the spirits in which they believe are ultimately of the dead, although often associated with some novel feature of the physical environment. Whether this connection with ancestors is genuine or not is here immaterial. Inasmuch as Ellis, in writing of the negroes of the Slave and Gold coasts,[1] points out the same association of spirits with natural objects and phenomena, and says, moreover, that he is firmly convinced that in the large majority of cases there is no connection to be traced with the dead, we may hold it as a possibility that, in the case of the negroes known to Nassau, the association of the spirit with the natural object is more primitive than its association with the dead.[2] But, whatever the origin of

[1] *Vide The Tshi-, Ewe-, and Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Gold and Slave Coasts.*

[2] It is worthy of note that very frequently people of ability in some lines, but with no specific training in ethnological subjects, when attempting to describe a religious system with which they have come in direct contact, take for granted the dictum that all primitive religions are based on ancestor-worship. Witness Lafcadio Hearn and the religions of Japan. In any

the spirits, they seem, among these African tribes, to have no well-defined characteristics or powers. "The powers and functions of the several classes of spirits do not seem to be distinctly defined. Certainly they do not confine themselves either to their recognized locality or to the usually understood function pertaining to their class. Their powers and functions shade into each other. . . . They are limited as to the nature of their powers; no spirit can do all things. A spirit's efficiency runs only on a certain line or lines."[1]

As an explanation for this state of affairs, we would refer to the character of the social body. As far as can be gathered from Nassau's account, there is nothing fixed and definite about it, as, for example, is the case with the Central Australians. There are few definite marriage regulations, no set of customs relating to the various periods of life, such as initiation ceremonies, in which all join with a definite purpose. There is no exact system of relationship, no regular subordination of the various groups to a ruling body or chief, nor any other than a sporadic priesthood. In fact, the lack of a definite body of regulative customs is proof of a low degree of social organization. The food problem, which is without doubt the most potent cause of social differentiation, hardly exists for these people. Their few secret societies and their ceremonies, such as the one preliminary to fishing, to which reference has already been made, are always matters of concern for limited groups only, and for individuals. They afford no opportunity for the crystallization of any permanent corporate consciousness. It is not strange that the values of such a people are chaotic and changing. What little general

case, a sweeping use of the principle opens one to some little suspicion. Cf. also Miss Kingsley, *West African Studies*, pp. 131 f., who holds that reverence of ancestors is purely incidental in West Africa.

[1] Nassau, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

religion has been developed has been only imperfectly conceived by the people. Nassau tells us[1] "the views of the great masses of the people on these subjects (public religious ceremonies) are exceedingly vague and indefinite. They attend these ceremonies on account of the parade and excitement that usually accompany them, but they have no knowledge of their origin, their true nature, or their results." In other words, the social body is not definite enough to produce a clear-cut religious attitude, but, such as it is, it mediates a value attitude of a lower grade, namely, that which comes from mere mingling together in the performance of a ceremony. It is possible, of course, that such a ceremony points to a time when the social consciousness was more stable and definite; if such was the case, it is necessary to account for the present condition through some sort of degeneration. On the other hand, if it were a comparatively simple ceremony closely associated with, or expressing, some practical interest, it would be through just such social excitement in the performance that the sense of ultimate and profound worth would develop.

Among the Eskimo of Greenland may be found very definite conceptions of value in lines closely connected with their life-activities, but beyond these everything is vaguely conceived. Thus their idea of the duties of hospitality is clear, as also that of the private ownership of certain kinds of property and the possession in common of other kinds of property, particularly of food supplies. And the same holds true with whatever else is connected intimately with their somewhat insistent problems of existence. When, however, any activity or conception loses its close connection with these objects of vivid attention, it loses definiteness. "There are many legends and much superstition, but it all lacks clear and definite form;

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 74, quoted from Wilson's *West Africa.*

conceptions of the supernatural vary from individual to individual, and they produce, as a whole, the impression of a religion in process of formation, a mass of incoherent and fantastic notions which have not yet crystallized into a definite view of the world."[1] This is no doubt an example of a half-developed religion which cannot, under present conditions, integrate any further. Matters connected with food, shelter, and clothing are, of necessity, so insistently present to attention that it is impossible for any large number of subsidiary, and only indirectly useful, activities to accumulate. Most of the things done must produce definite and tangible results. Hence personal skill in the handling of kaiaks and weapons has developed to a very high degree, and there are relatively few of the preliminary ceremonies found among races whose food conditions are less strenuous. So obviously does skill determine the success of an expedition or hunt that there has been small opportunity for any theories of the assistance of spirits or unseen agencies to grow up and take possession of their minds, as, for example, has been the case with the Malays. They do have some ideas of spirit help and spirit opposition, but, from the accounts one can procure of them, these ideas are not the centralizing ones which they are found to be in other quarters of the globe.

The negroes of the Slave coast, described by Ellis, furnish further evidence of the effect of defective social structure upon the notion of value. Passing along the Slave and the Gold coasts, according to this author,[2] one finds an increasing definiteness of social organization. The Tshi-speaking people of the Slave coast have no definite central organization. The topography of the country has caused the natives to settle in

[1] Nansen, *Eskimo Life*, p. 224.

[2] *Vide* the volumes on the Tshi-, Ewe-, and Yoruba-speaking peoples referred to on a preceding page.

little groups, families, and town companies, all more or less isolated. There are, among them, vaguely recognized general deities, but the local spirits are by far more important. These are, however, of the most fluctuating character. Every natural feature that has attracted attention has its spirit, and some of these are capable of being transferred to fetich objects which are reverenced or discarded almost at the whim of their possessors. Nothing has a definite and fixed value which under all circumstances the individual is bound to respect. This is evidently because there is no definitely evolved tribal consciousness which reënfórces and sustains the transient valuations of the single individual.

Passing along the coast to the Ewe- and Yoruba-speaking peoples, one finds an increasingly definite and permanent social organization and a corresponding decrease in the importance of the vague local spirits, and an increased importance attributed to the general deities, who with them have definite, well-recognized, and permanent characteristics. It is true we should not hastily conclude that the indefinite social organization is the cause of the indefinite values simply because the two are found to be coexistent. The question might be raised as to whether both could not be coördinate results of some temperamental trait in certain peoples. This, of course, would not be an explanation, but merely a shift of the problem. Temperament is an effect rather than a cause, and it is undoubtedly to be traced to various objective conditions under which the life-process of divers groups has had to work itself out. It is in some subtle combination of these objective conditions that we are to find the ultimate basis of different types of social organization. As we have seen in the case of the Eskimo, the food conditions may be preeminent factors; or topographical conditions, as in the case of the negroes mentioned above, may be chief factors. These

objective conditions, whatever they are, determine both the character of the social group and the kinds of values which it possesses. Our point, then, is that the development of these values is closely dependent upon the social atmosphere.

It is interesting to compare the conceptions of value current among these loosely organized African tribes with those of the lower but more definitely organized Australians. The Australian system of relationship and the regulations of marriage involve an elaborate organization of the tribes. This organization is permanent; the details of it have fixed names, and are connected in various ways with a totemistic system. The result is a vast accumulation of worths, or values, both built up and sustained by the social body. Their initiation ceremonies are far more elaborate and apparently of far more significance to them than is the case with those of the negroes. There can be no question but that the union of the entire group in the performance of these ceremonies makes them of great import to the old and middle-aged men, not to speak of the awe they inspire in the novitiates and in the women. The same may be said of the ceremonies, the *Intichiuma*, designed to increase the supply of the totem animal or plant. Primitive notions of sacredness appear in the secrecy observed regarding certain of the rites, the names bestowed on the boys at initiation, and the traditions of the totems which are then for the first time told to them. "It is by means of the performances . . . that the traditions dealing with this subject, which is of the greatest importance in the eyes of the natives, are firmly impressed upon the mind of the novice, to whom everything he sees and hears is new and surrounded with an air of mystery." [1]

In the initiation ceremonies the doings of their half-human ancestors are dramatically represented, and the totemic

[1] Spencer and Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 229.

group concerned is thus kept keenly alive to their peculiar theory of reincarnation.[1] We wish to suggest here the possibility that the very theory itself may owe its existence to the dramatic rehearsal of the *Alcheringa* (ancestral) doings. If such is the case, it is an interesting illustration of our theory of the development of emotional values. Is it not more than likely that ceremonies directly imitative of animals, as these are in many cases, should in the savage mind produce in time the belief that the performer was the reincarnation of the spirit of the being represented? The fact that in all the tribes, with the exception of certain ones in the interior, the Arunta and the Ilpirra, these ceremonies avowedly and simply represent the actions of certain totemic animals, points, as it seems to us, to a time when these dramatic rehearsals, along with the knocking out of teeth, and circumcision, were initiation ceremonies, and that among the central tribes the particular meaning above referred to was developed. There are many ways in which primitive man might be led to imitate the actions of familiar animals. Depending upon some of them for food, and having to be on his guard against others, he is of necessity quite acutely conscious of them and their habits. Their swiftness, their cunning, and their strength cannot fail to act upon him as forceful suggestions. He might imitate them to gain their powers, to get control over them before the hunt, or, as a sort of sport, he might rehearse afterwards the conflict of the chase and enjoy again its emotional thrills. The result of such imitative performances would be relatively evanescent if they were largely matters of individual caprice. But when groups of individuals unite in them, they inevitably become social habits, and under these circumstances new meanings can develop almost *ad infinitum*. Thus a custom is almost sure

[1] Spencer and Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 228.

to persist, although the occasion for it has ceased to exist. Along with the habit, or custom, remain its psychical effects, and these may be reinterpreted in any way the savage pleases. In time, there would develop out of these simple mediating acts elaborate ceremonials, having profound values in initiations, and as the most complex and remote value of all, a theory regarding the origin of the tribe and the doings of its ancestors. These effects, let it be noted, are all absolutely dependent upon the existence of a social atmosphere which gives continuity to the habit, and stimulates it at the proper time. The degree to which the consciousness of value has developed through these various practices is evident from the fact that they are performed with the greatest circumspection and with the highest degree of solemnity.

The Central Australians have a well-developed conception of sacred places in their *Ertnatalunga*, or secret repositories of sacred objects, the *Churinga*. Their conception is quite different from the African's notion of places inhabited by spirits. The exact location of these sacred storehouses is carefully concealed from the women and from other groups. They are the resting-places of the most sacred possessions of a group. Now both these collections of sacred objects and their permanent hiding-places would be impossible of development except under the influence of a well-organized and fairly permanent social body. The sacredness of the *Ertnatalunga* is further enhanced by the fact that a man must prove that he is worthy by showing his self-control and dignity before these sacred places are revealed to him. If he is frivolous and given to chattering, like the women, he may never be permitted to see their location. The importance of the social body in creating and sustaining such an attitude is perfectly obvious.

The *Churinga* may be compared with the fetich objects of the negroes described by Ellis, Nassau, and Miss Kingsley. These,

in most cases, have little permanent value, such as there is depending almost entirely upon the whim of the owner. The fetich is the conceived abode of a spirit, easily secured and as lightly cast aside, if the spirit is suspected of being inefficient or of having left it. The *Churinga* are not exactly fetiches, although they are associated in some way with the spirit individuals of the group. The importance of the group in determining their character is clear. They have a permanent and hence a greater value than do the fetiches. The spirits associated with them, instead of representing individual caprice, stand for the permanent social group. They are guarded by the old men as the most sacred possession of the tribe; the loss of them would be the most serious evil which could befall it. They are sometimes loaned with the greatest ceremony to neighboring tribes. The entire system of beliefs regarding them would be almost inconceivable outside of a strongly organized social body, which would in the first place create the sense of their worth in the novice and reënforce it and sustain it when once created.

Creation myths are symbols of a certain type of value which can appear only among well-developed social groups. With most, if not all, primitive peoples such myths deal with the origin of the tribes possessing them rather than with the actual beginnings of the material universe. The creation myth is an objective expression or projection of the group's sense of self-hood, or individuality. They express the conceived relation of the tribe to the world in which it finds itself. Their definiteness and organization may be taken as an index of the group's corporate consciousness. Other things being equal, the possession of a well-developed creation myth would point to the presence within the group of many well-worked-out conceptions of value. The Eskimo, who, as we have seen, have a simple social organization, and whose conditions of life have made

the food problem the most insistent object of attention, have only a few scattering and unimportant myths of their origin. Their stories deal almost entirely with conditions as they are at present; they are reflections, in other words, of their dominant objects of attention. The Indians of the western plateaus of North America have also no creation myths, but only a great mass of animal stories of little or no organization, corresponding exactly with their shifting, uncertain type of life. On the other hand, the elaborately organized clans of the North Pacific coast and the Pueblos of the Southwest have correspondingly complicated myths of their origin and of the fashioning of the world into a habitation suited to their needs. The highly developed Iroquois tribes also had an elaborate creation myth.[1]

Turning to the West Africans, we find they have no creation myths as far as we can learn from the accounts of their observers, while the natives of central Australia have an extremely well-developed one. The creation myth may be regarded as an organized statement of the ultimate relationship of the group to the material, animal, and vegetable world by which it is surrounded. While not in itself religious, the possession of such a myth by a people is an indication of the development of a type of consciousness which can retain quite deep and insistent conceptions of value. There is no doubt but that there are some types of environment which are in themselves unfavorable to any permanent sense of worth. Such an environment arouses no great and generally felt need in the populations supported by it. Wants are easily satisfied, and there are no great dangers to avoid. It is also no doubt due to the character of the environment, in large measure, that the social organization is itself of high or low grade. But the character of society, whatever its cause, reacts powerfully, as

[1] F. Boas, *International Quarterly*, Vol. XI, p. 341.

we have shown, upon the primitive conceptions of worth mediated by natural conditions, so that a double force may be said to be active in the development of the higher value attitudes.

The primitive Semites furnish a good deal of illustration of the importance of the social factor in the formation and development of value-concepts. The exigencies of desert life on the scattered oases capable of supporting only small bodies of people resulted in the formation of small and relatively compact clans. Stability of organization was necessary for a clan which held its own against those who sought to secure its food advantages. This stability resulted in many customs built up about the problems of food, and these, in turn, furnished the basis for their conceptions of value. Of these customs we shall speak in the next chapter. We are here interested only to see that the value-concepts of later Semitic culture were given form and permanence by these primitive social activities. Mention has already been made of the important appreciations of value arising out of the notion of kinship. We may here add the conception of fertility, both animal and vegetable, which became a symbol, in later times, of many religious values, or, rather, it created some value-attitudes which, under certain conditions, became religious. Out of these primitive activities came also the notion of sacrifice, with all its subtle meanings.

The fundamental fact is the persisting social structure which expresses itself in certain sorts of activity. In the case of the Semites, these activities seem pretty clearly to have been economic ones. Some of their most important customs centred about the act of eating together and in festivals connected with their flocks and the harvesting of their most important vegetable food, the date. The problem of reproduction was an important one to them, probably because the clans were

polyandrous, and descent was counted through the mother, which custom is, in turn, to be explained by their economic conditions. The communal meal served as a medium for the development of the notion of communion with the god, and this is an important step toward the higher ethical notions of the deity. We shall return to this point shortly in the discussion of the general problem of the development of the idea of God. The point here is that the evolution of a higher conception of worth is conditioned by the social act of eating together.

The definitely appointed and observed festivals of the yeaning time and of the date-palm harvest[1] were also, with the Semites, centres about which definite values grew up. *In fact every one of their religious beliefs can be shown primarily to have been an evaluation of some social activity.*

W. Robertson Smith held that, in primitive times, among these people, everything connected with the group or clan had its religious significance, that is to say, its value side. This diffuse religious consciousness is to be interpreted as a stage antecedent to the consciousness of any far-reaching values. It can hardly be said to be a religious stage at all. It is simply the condition in which the various necessary objects of endeavor have developed their appropriate and well-recognized technique. It means, of course, that these things must be performed with circumspection, but so, also, it is with us in our daily work. We have found out ways of doing things, ways which appear to us as best, and we usually follow carefully the rules which experience has thus taught us. The primitive man, to be sure, thought of all these activities as conditioned in many ways by spiritual essences or powers, but that of itself made his acts no more religious than are ours when we treat live wires with caution.

There are evidences of this diffuse value-consciousness

[1] Cf. Barton, *Semitic Origins*, pp. 111 ff.

among many other primitive people than the Semites. Thus, of the Hurons we are told, "'. . . their remedies for diseases; their greatest amusements when in good health; their fishing, their hunting, and their trading; the success of their crops, of their wars, and of their council; almost all abound in diabolical ceremonies.' Hardly any feast was held at which some tobacco or fat was not thrown into the fire as a mark of respect to some deity or deities." [1] In all such cases the religious practices, as they are called, are hardly above the level of mere practical expedients. Perhaps one reason why these simple ceremonies have been regarded as religious has been that they are quite like the genuine religious practices of a later stage of development. As certain of these values stand out and acquire great prominence in the social consciousness, they become in so far religious, and the activities, which were before only practical expedients, are now transformed into religious ceremonials.

Abundant illustrations could be found of the connection between the values recognized by a people and their objects of economic interest. It is perfectly natural that such objects should, among many peoples, be persistently at the centre of attention. It is important to realize that it is this ability to claim attention that is the basis of the value-consciousness rather than the mere fact of economic utility. The values recognized by the Kafirs of South Africa and by the Todos of India are clearly extensions of economic worths. So are many of those of the Australians, as we have already pointed out.

But, among peoples where the problem of food is less serious, the activities, and hence the values, have been of quite a different sort. It has been shown that the negroes of West Africa find it comparatively easy to obtain food, so that the attention

[1] Sara H. Stites, *The Economics of the Iroquois*, p. 135. The quotation is from *Jesuit Relations*, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 53.

is left free for other things. Their values are located in high hills, in dangerous pools and watercourses, and in diseases such as smallpox. Here, however, as we have attempted to indicate, there is a low degree of social solidarity, and there is therefore small chance for these values to assume a definite and permanent form.

The Head-hunting Dyaks of Borneo furnish another interesting variation. Here we find well-organized groups who have begun head-hunting in comparatively recent times.[1] About this vocation, or diversion, cluster their values. The heads of enemies are the bearers of the greatest blessings to the captors. They say that the value of the captured head was first called to their attention by a dream which one of their leaders once had, but the realization of the value by the group as a whole is to be attributed rather to the exciting expeditions in which all unite their efforts. The extreme precautions necessary to insure success and the subsequent necessity of guarding their own long-house from possible retaliations all involve considerable mental tension, which easily finds its objective symbol in the fruits of the hunt, namely, the captured heads. In the case of these Head-hunters, as can be readily seen, the objects of attention are not directly economic. They seem to have very little religious belief aside from what finds expression in the captured heads; these are their gods, the transmitters to them of every conceivable blessing. The explanation is that the attention of these savages is so entirely absorbed in these expeditions and in the consequences of the expeditions, that they find therein the complete expression of their ideals of life, of their highest conceptions of value. The importance of the compact social group in the creation of these values is self-evident.

[1] *Vide* M. Morris, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. XXVI, p. 165.

That which has been in some measure illustrated, and in a degree proved, it is hoped, may be restated thus: A compact group, such as may be found among the Central Australians, the Dyaks, or the primitive Semites, furnishes a basis on which the notion of far-reaching values can take footing. The relatively stable social background is absolutely essential to the extended development of value-attitudes. This seems to be certain, because where the social organization is of low grade and hence somewhat fluent, the values mediated are found to be correspondingly indefinite, uncertain, private, and more or less transitory. The social group may be said to furnish the matrix from which are differentiated all permanent notions of value, and these are primarily conscious attitudes aroused in connection with activities which mediate problems more or less important for the perpetuation of the social body. These values may be of any kind, but especially æsthetic and religious, which are representative of such values in their most definite form. Whether the attitude turns out to be religious, or whether æsthetic, depends upon the nature of the context which gives rise to it. In general it may be said that the difference between them is one of relationships rather than of intrinsic content. Thus, the peculiarity of æsthetic values is that they are detached or isolated from the problems of life, while values of the religious type are expressions of these problems in their most ultimate form. But in any case there can be no question as to the close connection of the two attitudes, and in all probability they are always intermingled. A valuational attitude in which the emphasis is upon the detached enjoyment of the moment would, of course, be æsthetic, while it would be religious if the emphasis were upon the consciousness of the relationship of the act to the welfare of the group. In some types of the modern religious consciousness the connection is not with the group but with

some conception of the ultimate welfare of the individual. In primitive religion such a conception is impossible. The individual can think of his own continued welfare only in connection with the continued prosperity of the group.

Many illustrations may be found of the interrelation of the æsthetic and the religious in social activities. Thus, the performance of the Mountain Chant, a nine-day religious festival of the Navaho, affords not only opportunity for religious expression but also for a jolly social time.[1] The merrymaking attendant upon the religious rites of primitive Semitic peoples is evidence of the large æsthetic element involved in them. The intricate details of the Australian ceremonials are undoubtedly productive of æsthetic reactions in the performers and onlookers, just as with ourselves in watching the evolutions of a body of soldiers, or any other complicated activity.

Thus far our main object has been to point out the way in which the social body mediates the development of value-attitudes. Of necessity, many religious acts have been used as illustrative of the process. A few words yet remain to be said to connect it more definitely with the religious consciousness *per se*. The religious sense of the modern man represents an indefinite extension of the notion of value. From the point of view here suggested, the religious attitude may be said to be the consciousness of the value of action in terms of its ultimate organization. In a highly figurative and symbolic form of statement this attitude may be described by some people as 'living in the power of an endless life.' This statement would apply to the primitive as well as to the modern conception of religious value, for the activity organized with reference to the welfare of the tribe as a whole is equivalent, psychologically, to behavior viewed by the individual as significant

[1] *5th Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, p. 386.

eternally with reference to his own destiny. To the primitive man, the group to which he belongs is his universe; whatever else appeals to him in any way is taken, as a matter of course, to be related to the group. Thus, in several parts of the world, the natural races have conceived the whites as the embodied spirits of their own departed tribesmen.[1] The extent to which the conception referred to above is generalized, or develops, depends upon the character of the organization of the group. If, as we have pointed out, the group is definite and compact, there will be many activities in which it, as a whole, takes part, and there is therefore more opportunity afforded for the development of conceptions of ultimate value, that is, conceptions which are, as a matter of course, expressed in terms of the entire group. Such values are ultimate values because the primitive man's horizon is bounded by his tribe. They cannot even be a degree less than ultimate, because, from the first, they have come to consciousness as concerning the whole group.

The question of the relationship between the religious conceptions and attitudes of the culture races, and these, described in this chapter, which lie so close to activities which mediate the pressing problems of existence, is an interesting one. As was pointed out in Chapter II, when the notion of value is once aroused, it can be transmitted from generation to generation in connection with the activities with which it is associated, by what has been called social heredity. In time these activities are transformed into rituals of more or less refined and subdued types, but they serve still to sustain the concepts and attitudes to which they at the first gave rise. It is important to see that the mere verbal transmission of the religious concepts would not suffice for the excitation of the religious attitude in the new generation. The setting of activity, either

[1] Nassau, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

of ritual or of prescribed religious duties or virtues, serves to give body to the concepts, or to give them vital connection with life. It is only thus that the psychic state which we have called an attitude could originally appear, and its reappearance in each generation is due to the continuance of the same type of conditions.

CHAPTER V

THE ORIGIN OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND CEREMONIALS

In the preceding chapter the attempt was made to show that the social atmosphere furnishes the *sine qua non* of that peculiar type of consciousness known as the religious. It is this atmosphere which has produced the religious quality as well as conditioned the development of the very sense of value itself.

We wish now to go a step farther. *The religious acts and ideas are themselves an organic part of the activities of the social body.* They are, in fact, social acts. Under certain circumstances, customs become religious, or acquire religious values. It may be said that religious practices are social habits specialized in a certain direction. That a nation's gods are direct reflections of its social and political ideals, and that the deities cannot represent a higher ethical plane than that of the worshippers, is well recognized by students of religion. Barton gives clear expression to these facts when he says, "It is a law which may be regarded as practically universal, that the religious conceptions of a people are expressed in forms which are modelled, in large degree, on those political and social institutions which the economical conditions of their situation have produced. Thus, a god could not be conceived as a father where marriage was so unstable that fatherhood was no recognized feature of the social structure, nor as a king among a people into whose experience the institution of kingship had never entered." [1]

[1] Barton, *Semitic Origins*, p. 82.

But we may go even farther than this and maintain that religious beliefs and practices are not merely *modelled* upon the analogy of a people's economic and social life. The religious life *is* this social life in one of its phases. It is an organic part of the activity of the social body, not merely something built upon it. In other words, as before suggested, we may hold that the religious aspects of a people's life are special differentiations of the social order which appear under certain favoring conditions.

It may be appropriate, before attempting to illustrate our specific point, to review briefly the well-recognized relationship between the religion of a people and its political structure.

Although this relationship is so generally admitted, it gains an additional significance from the point of view thus far developed. That is to say, the relation is no merely external one, but is organic with the very development of the political structure itself. The following cases are illustrative; many more might be given, and others will no doubt occur to the reader. The religions of all the peoples of antiquity were inseparable from their political organization, a fact particularly true of the ancient Egyptians and of the Israelites. The establishment of a monarchial government at Jerusalem and the centralization of the worship of Yahweh at that place are practically interchangeable terms. The first thought of the leaders in the secession of the northern tribes was to establish centres in the north about which their traditional religious conceptions could find expression. To many of the Hebrews the destruction of Jerusalem and the dissolution of their national faith were synonymous. The same intimate relationship between government and religion in Persia, Greece, and Rome is well known. Among the ancient Teutons the priesthood was essentially a tribal institution. Both in the tribal

subdivisions and the household the priestly duties were performed by the temporal head. This condition of affairs seems to indicate that the development of the priesthood was intimately connected with the development of social structure.

Eskimo laws and customs are closely connected, if not identical, with religious opinions. Rink tells us that the abolition of the *angekok*, the medicine-man and religious leader of a group, would mean the destruction of every authority in the tribe.[1] We have referred already to the judicial-social gatherings of these peoples, and shall have occasion to mention them again in another connection. Here they are of interest as an illustration of how the governmental, religious, and social functions of a primitive group may find expression in a single activity. The rudimentary religion of the Australians depended upon the old men who were the repositories of tribal lore, leaders in the ceremonies, and the nearest approach to political rulers whom these people knew. There is and was, among them, absolutely no demarcation between religious and governmental control. The coast tribes of the Malay Peninsula, repeatedly subjugated by foreign invaders, lost their native political organization and probably with it their religion, the remnants of which persist to-day as magic plus a great body of myth, or folklore.[2] It seems possible that myth and tradition might more likely persist after a political catastrophe than ceremonials, not because they are more truly the essence of religion than are the ceremonials, but because their preservation and transmission is a simpler matter. When, however, the myths lose the support of the active attitudes, partly represented in the ceremonials, they quickly lose their religious character and eventually lapse into mere folklore.

[1] Rink, *Greenlanders*, p. 142.
[2] Skeat, *Malay Magic*, London, 1900.

Of the Pueblo Indians, we are told, the civil officials and war captains are also religious functionaries, and that their government in general is closely blended with their religious institutions. Their sociology and religion are so intimately woven together that the study of one cannot be pursued without the other.[1] Of the Tusayan Pueblos it is said that the Spanish priests sought to prohibit the sacred dances and votive offerings to the nature deities, and to suppress all secret rites, religious orders, and societies, but that these were too closely incorporated with the system of gentes and other family kinships to admit of extinction.[2]

Nassau, writing of the West Africans, says: "Religion is intimately mixed with every one of these aforementioned sociological aspects of family, rights of property, authority, tribal organization, judicial trials, punishments, intertribal relations, and commerce."[3] In the kingdoms of Dahomi and Porto Novo the kings are regarded as the heads of the priesthood. As Ellis remarks, "this is not merely the union of despotism and priestcraft, but is rather an illustration of the intimate connection between religion and social structure."[4] Many writers have made us familiar with the fact that the family, social, and political life of the Japanese is based on their religion.

However, it is scarcely necessary to multiply these general illustrations. It may be regarded as a generally accepted fact that religion, morality, and law form an undifferentiated whole in primitive societies. This is true even in societies of a high degree of culture, the continuity of whose

[1] Spencer, F. C., *The Education of the Pueblo Child*, p. 29.

[2] Mrs. M. C. Stevenson, The Sia, *Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (1889–1890).

[3] Nassau, *Fetichism in West Africa*, p. 25.

[4] See his *Tshi-, Ewe-, and Yoruba-speaking People of the Gold and Slave Coasts*, especially p. 144 of *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples.*

evolution has not been too much interrupted by external influences.[1] Such facts as these have the greatest significance when taken in connection with the hypothesis that the religious activities of a group of people are fundamentally their practical, social, and 'control' activities, which have, according to well-recognized psychological laws, undergone a special development. The religious consciousness, as a body of psychic attitudes, dispositions, concepts, and beliefs, represents the net outcome of the overt evolution. Specific and detailed illustrations in support of this further point will now be offered.

The Kwakiutl Indians of the Northwest furnish interesting evidence, which will serve as a transition from the type of cases given above[2] and the ones which are to follow. Their present social organization is not the same as that upon which their religious life is based. We are apparently not able at present to account for this state of affairs, but it is, in any case, a most significant fact that their entire social organization changes, when, in the winter season, they begin to celebrate the rites of their secret societies. "Instead of being grouped in clans, the Indians are now grouped according to the spirits which have initiated them." In the various groups, divisions are made according to the dances or ceremonies bestowed on the persons composing those groups. Societies, in other words, take the place of the clans. "The object of the whole winter ceremonial is, first, to bring back the youth who is supposed to stay (*i.e.* to be staying) with the supernatural being who is the protector of his society, and then, when he has returned in a state of ecstasy," to restore him to sanity by the exorcism of songs and dances.[3] We wish to call especial attention to the fact that we have here a series of

[1] Cf. Farnell, *Evolution of Religion*, p. 109. [2] *Vide supra*, pp. 89 ff.

[3] Franz Boas, "The social organization and the secret societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Report of the U.S. National Museum*, 1895, pp. 418 ff.

religious ceremonies which are so closely connected with a certain type of social organization that that social order must be reinstated before the ceremonies can be performed. Such a condition as this seems to point strongly to an organic connection between, if not identity of, religious practices and the activities expressive of a certain type of social structure. In the next place, it is to be noted that these religious ceremonials are not directed toward any deity, nor are they strictly worshipful acts, but they rather possess for their performers immediate practical importance for the maintenance of the social organization, *i.e.* they are directed toward bringing the novices safely back and restoring them to reason. Here, then, are religious activities which are primarily a necessary part of the practices of a social group.

We should interpret from this point of view the many statements of ethnologists regarding the general religiosity apparent in so many of the diverse phases of primitive life. For example, "There is, of course, a great deal of superstitious practice connected with all these performances (*i.e.* in Pueblo life), for the Indian is so fettered to his complicated creed that his most insignificant actions are associated with some ritualistic performance." [1] The fact to which all such statements point is that there is always a background of more or less necessary social activity, from which definite religious customs emerge, so gradually, however, that one type constantly tends to fuse with the other.

We may take occasion here to remark the connection, among many primitive peoples, of religious rites and some sort of secret societies.[2] It seems that these societies are

[1] A. F. Bandelier, *Papers of the Archaeological Institute of America*, Vol. III, p. 161.

[2] Cf. Webster, *Primitive Secret Societies*, for a general discussion of the whole problem of the origin and functions of such organizations.

particularly apt to be found[1] where the general social organization is defective. However obscure may be the causes leading to the formation of secret societies in a primitive group, the fact of the connection therewith of some sort of ceremonial is a striking illustration of our point that religious ceremonies are in some way primarily the natural expression of group life in its various practical, social, and play phases.

Another excellent illustration of the dependence of a religious rite upon some sort of social structure is that of a certain type of sacrifice among the Todas. Nearly all the Toda clans are divided into two subdivisions, or *kudr*, and the offerings, in this type of sacrifice, "always pass from one *kudr* to another. . . . There are a few clans of recent origin which have no *kudr*, and the members of these clans cannot make the offerings. In other clans, one *kudr* has become extinct, and so long as no occasion for these ceremonies should arise, nothing is done to supply the deficiency. As a general rule, it is only when some trouble arises which may require one or other of these ceremonies that a redistribution of the members of the clan is made, and it is decided that one or more of the *pòlm*, or smaller subdivisions of the clan, shall be constituted a new *kudr*." [2]

It will thus be seen that we pass imperceptibly from these types of religion, which are definitely related to political structure, to types which are quite as definitely related to social organization and to phases of social activity. These latter types of religion we shall shortly discuss in considerable detail. In the meantime it will be significant to note the extent to which definiteness of religious consciousness is associated with definiteness of social organization. If the

[1] R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, Chaps. V, VI.
[2] W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas*, London, 1906, p. 295.

general thesis of the chapter — that religious acts and ideas are an organic part of the activities and ideas of the social body — is true, we should probably find diffuse forms of religion among those peoples who possess little social differentiation or little social solidarity.

The negroes of the African 'Gold Coast,' described by Ellis, seem, in many features of their life, to be examples of such a state of affairs. The Tshi-speaking peoples, according to this author, have at present no well-established social organization that extends beyond the village community. The character of the surface topography is such that there can be little development of tribal life. There are some customs regulating initiation and marriage, but the reader does not get the impression that they are very definite in nature, nor that they involve the entire local group in their performance. The food problem is not a pressing one, so that here also there is no need for united action and consequent organization of the group. The religious ideas of these peoples are as vague and as fluent as their social consciousness. Thus they recognize four classes of deities. The first two classes are nature deities, which are fixed in number, but have so little place in the thought or regard of the negroes that they can be called gods only in name. The spirits of the third and fourth classes are fluctuating in number, the natives' theory being that they may be increased by appointment on the part of the deities of the upper classes. These lesser spirits serve as tribal, village, family, and individual gods. The whole system of conduct regarding them seems to be very fluent. There is not enough of a unified tribal consciousness to generalize and render permanent the deity of any one locality. For the same reason the already existing general deities are pretty largely mere names which arouse no religious feelings of any sort. The real religion of these people seems to consist in a vague regard for a lot of detached

values; spirits are worshipped or rejected in the most capricious manner. In all these matters there is much less fixity and definiteness than is to be found among the adjoining tribes, the Ewe- and Yoruba-speaking peoples of the Slave coast. Since, as has been already pointed out, the social organization of these tribes is in many ways much farther advanced than is that of the Tshi, it seems legitimate to infer that the vague religion of the latter is in some way related to, or conditioned by, their rudimentary social structure. Regarding their social structure, Ellis says that they are divided into twelve totemic divisions; marriage is exogamous; descent is counted in the female line; there is general abstinence from eating the totem; of religious ceremonials, some are propitiations, others concern the dead, and still others relate to hunting and harvesting. There are also some ceremonies which accompany the return of armies, the reception of visitors, and other important events in the social life of the tribe. These ceremonies are, however, rather indefinite, and do not seem to involve large portions of the tribe in such a way as indicates the presence of a very marked social consciousness. The priests form a somewhat indefinite order which is being constantly recruited from the outside, anybody who wishes being readily admitted. Their chief function is to exorcise and manipulate the various spirits which may happen to be of concern to any individual or to any village. There can hardly, in fact, be said to be a definite priesthood, but merely a somewhat chaotic group of individuals, with no recognizable organization, with simply a few trade secrets and possibly with a little more cunning than their fellows, all of which, together with possible neurotic tendencies, render them persons of power within the tribes.

The Ewe-speaking people have a more highly developed political organization than do the Tshi. Some of the tribes

are united into the kingdoms of Dahomey and Porto Novo. Others are semi-independent. It is significant to note that here the general nature deities are more than names; in fact, that they are of more importance than the tribal or local gods. The priesthood has a definite organization, of which, in the monarchial groups, the kings are regarded as the heads.[1] Even the king, however, is not supreme, but must pay due regard to religious custom, meaning, it would seem, that custom is more primitive than kingship, and that custom therefore expresses the deeper religious values.

The social organization of the Yoruba peoples is still more highly developed, for with them descent is counted through both parents, and succession is in the male. The priesthood is divided into recognized orders, and the whole is formed into a definite secret society. Here the local, fluent spirits are thrust entirely into the background, and the general gods are supreme.

The Kafirs of South Africa have no definite social structure. Their customs are numerous enough, but scattering and changing. They have no conception of fixity in anything, not even in the case of their gods, their legends, or their myths. All these matters, whether of custom or belief, vary indefinitely, having apparently no other standard than the whim of the individual. The notion of Umkulunkulu, one of their chief divinities, is worth noting in this connection. In the first place, their idea of him is extremely hazy, and there is little agreement as to who he really is. Sometimes he is called a creator, sometimes a great-great-grandfather; in fact, all their more remote ancestors go by this name. As the family has its Umkulunkulu, so does the tribe, and naturally, also, the world. In other words, there is no definite social structure

[1] Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast.* Cf. *supra*, p. 91.

among the Kafirs which can unify customs and can afford for beliefs a fixed standard.[1]

The Masai, a division of the negroes of East Africa, present the same deficiency of social organization, united with indefinite religious beliefs and practices. Their commonest word for a deity is used indiscriminately of various striking objects, of natural phenomena, and of spirits. Their worship, like their belief, is vague, and lacking in ceremonial. The customs of the Masai, as in the case of the Kafirs, are numerous, but individualistic rather than social; that is, the social groups do not meet to perform rites of any sort. The groups are divided into boys, warriors, and elders. The warriors are a well-organized body of young men who have no other desire apparently than military glory. The elders have little or no power, and consequently among them no state such as Uganda has developed. The nearest approach to a central and superior authority is the medicine-man, who is scarcely a religious functionary, since he does not stand for any religious beliefs, but is rather a diviner, a personage strictly analogous to the scientific man in a civilized state.[2]

Our preliminary thesis, namely, that a low-grade social structure lies back of chaotic religious ideas, receives further confirmation from certain facts regarding the primitive religions of North America. Dr. Boas says [3] that the continuity of mythological material, "and therefore its æsthetic quality, is least in the Arctic and in the Northwest. In the East, Southeast, and Southwest, where political and social organization has attained a higher perfection, and where the ceremonial life of the people is strongly developed, the origin

[1] Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, London, 1904. See also *Kafir Socialism*, by the same author, 1907.

[2] A. C. Hollis, *Masai, Their Language and Folklore*. See especially the Introduction by Sir Charles Eliot.

[3] *International Quarterly*, Vol. XI, p. 341.

story is also more fully developed . . . into it is woven the history of the origin of those phenomena, around which centres the interest of the Indians." Here it is evident that the ceremonial life and the social and political life are closely connected. In fact, we should say that they are but different aspects of the same thing. That the beliefs must, on their part, be closely connected with, if not the direct outgrowth of, the same social organization is equally manifest.[1]

From these general considerations we now turn to seek specific illustrations of our theory of the origin of religious practices, especially of rites and ceremonies, and their relation to the more ordinary activities of the social group. Stated in its most general form, the question before us is: Why do the simpler activities arising directly out of the life-process give rise to secondary activities, of which religious ceremonies are types? This question has already been answered in a general way in a preceding chapter[2] in the discussion of 'intermediate activities.' It was pointed out there that many of man's complex activities are necessary developments from practical adjustments, due to the recurrent need of meeting new or more complicated difficulties; that others are due to chance variations in the original activity, and preserved by imitation until they become customs. It was also pointed out that many accessory acts arise through association with an end which is insistently held in attention, when direct adjustments for attaining the end are for the time being impossible. These acts are closely akin to play, and are apt to be strongly emotional, just because the practical outgo is, at the moment, either purposely or necessarily held in check. Primitive cus-

[1] The general question of the meaning of definiteness of social organization should here be clearly kept in mind; *vide* Chap. VIII, *infra.*

[2] *Vide supra,* Chap. III, "The consciousness of value."

toms may, then, for our purposes, be conveniently classed as either practical or as accessory.

Some ceremonials and religious practices seem to be the outgrowth of adjustments which to the savage are decidedly practical. Others seem to be more related to play, to sports of various kinds; and still others seem to be the outgrowth of feasts of rejoicing before or after the harvest or hunt, or of feasts and dances preceding the departure of a war party, or after its return. All these types of activity are relatively simple, and it is easy to explain them on psychological grounds. Hence, whatever practices can be shown to be outgrowths of these elementary activities may be regarded as at least in a measure related and clarified. Mere 'practical' adjustments certainly do not need explanation here, whether or not we hold to the instrumental view of consciousness. The other types are in a measure either derivatives of the 'practical,' or are due to the overflow of energy after or during times of repression or times of emotional tension. Because these accessory activities are relatively high in emotional values, they probably furnish the basis for the largest number of religious ceremonials. Purely practical acts, in environments which make heavy demands upon the attention of a people, are apt to change frequently as the necessity of new adjustments arises, so that they do not form a good basis for the development of valuational attitudes. When, however, such acts become relatively fixed, because of the lack of change in the stimulating environment, they may become objects of attention in themselves, and important media of social intercourse, or at least of social expression. Under these conditions they frequently acquire religious value.

The social assemblies of the Greenland Eskimo are good examples of 'accessory' activities, and their social and æsthetic value is so great, and their function as an institution of social

control is so evident, that they may be considered religious rites. The Eskimo have, on the other hand, many habits connected with their hunting, but these depend so clearly upon individual skill and painstaking practice, and the conditions under which they are called forth are so acute, that they continue almost of necessity quite definitely 'practical,' and hence non-religious.

The general point, thus far, has been that some of the more fixed activities of a primitive group may acquire a certain religious value; in fact, that these are the first manifestations of religion, furnishing the objective conditions for the appearance of religion as a psychic attitude. It has been further shown that wherever we find chaotic or fluent religious concepts and practices we almost always find a chaotic social body. That this is the relation existing between a primitive social group and its religion will, we believe, be made more evident by the illustrations which follow. For convenience as well as clearness we group them into activities which seem most closely allied to primitive man's 'practical adjustments, and into those which are apparently the outcome of his 'accessory' employments. In many cases the practice, while distinctly religious, will bear marks of a more or less definite relationship to the 'practical' or 'accessory' activities of the group, while in others the *primary* character will be *social* or *practical*, although they will seem to have a decided religious coloring. In a word, there are among primitive peoples, and to a certain extent among the culture-races as well, many religious activities which reveal a kinship to the practical activities of the social body, and there are, likewise, many social and practical functions which seem to be to a certain extent religious. Facts such as these would apparently lead to the conclusion that the social organization and its activities constitute the ground from which religious practices

and religious consciousness itself are the more or less complex development.

In general, it seems a legitimate hypothesis that the group, as a social, economic, and political unit, is the primary postulate in the interpretation of every phenomenon of human life. That is, wherever it is possible to use these phases of life as explanations, it is not necessary to seek other and less obvious causes. If a social group tends naturally to express itself in various practical ways and in various social and playful forms, then that process which is seen to consist of one or more of these natural methods of activity does not require the introduction of any additional explanation such as an original religious motive. A social group is sure, in any case, to have its practical problems, its sports, and its festive occasions; we may more easily comprehend how these phases of action could be productive of a consciousness of higher values than that these values might have been given offhand, that is, that they should possess no antecedents or natural history. Hence we are impelled to believe that the feasts, dances, and all similar processes, found in such intimate connection with practically every primitive religion, were primarily the spontaneous expressions of primitive life under this or that appropriate condition. It is significant to note that these ceremonies *do* seem to take place at times when we should, in any case, expect some sort of an emotional overflow. Navaho and Moqui ceremonies occur in the winter, ostensibly because dangerous powers are less active, but psychologically because the more active pursuits of these peoples are, for the time being, of necessity suspended. A people, whether primitive or cultural, would under such circumstances seek to divert itself by sports, festivities, and dramatic rehearsals of stories. Supposing all myths are merely the product of idle fancy, as some of them doubtless are, the impulse would still be strong to

act them out, just as it is with our own little children, who can scarcely hear exciting stories without the same tendency to dramatize them. In the cases above mentioned, there would also at this season of the year be some anxious thought that the next season might be fruitful, and this very antecedent suspense would be sufficient ground, psychologically, for the appearance of many activities. It seems natural, then, that the things done at such a time should partake of the nature both of social festivities, pure and simple, and of what, to the untutored mind, were practical expedients to insure success in the following season's work. Possibly some of these doings would be not really practical expedients, but rather overflow activities such as are likely to occur in any somewhat prolonged period of suspense.

In general, it is a fact of social psychology that periods of relaxation, after times in which attention has been rather fully taken up with objective interests, also periods immediately following the successful drawing to a close of a long series of activities, as in the harvest or at the end of a hunt, will be somewhat full of emotional tensions which will find expression in various forms of social intercourse and in many activities closely allied to play. The same is also true of times of suspense before or during a hunt or conflict of any kind. Various joyous acts would also express the relief felt at the close of any dreary season, as in the springtime, after a hard winter, or in moonlight nights, after the dark portion of the month. The psychological reasons for such manifestations are already fairly well established, and need not be discussed here. We simply hold that phenomena of this sort are the spontaneous manifestations of such a psycho-physical organism as man and many animals possess. Now, it is a striking fact that almost any number of religious ceremonials are directly associated with just such periods of stress or relief as are mentioned

above. It is therefore difficult to avoid the conclusion that the religious values of these acts have been built up on the basis of the simpler social values which they originally possessed. In fact, all grades of practices, from the avowedly religious to the merely social, can be found among the natural races (and among the culture-races, too, for that matter).

The development of the religious from the 'practical' and from the social is seen in a general way in all such cases as have been mentioned in which the governmental functions of a group are regarded as religious, and where governmental officials are also religious officials. The statement has already been made that the political and religious institutions of the Pueblo are closely interwoven. There are priestly societies having as their object the performance of various tribal and social functions, such as those relating to war, medicine, hunting, as well as those relating specifically to ecclesiastical life.[1] The ceremonial life growing out of these religio-political organizations is quite elaborate. Here we are interested to point out only that the purely practical and economic organization of society becomes itself the basis for a certain amount of religious consciousness and religious practice.

The Pueblo natal ceremonies are good illustrations of acts which have both a practical and a religious value, and it certainly seems probable that the original character of the acts was practical, acquiring the religious quality in the manner explained in Chapter IV. At the birth of a child the paternal grandmother brings in, among other things, a bowl of water and a blanket, makes a yucca suds in the bowl, bathes the child while uttering a prayer of thanks, rubs the body with ashes, and prepares a bed of warm sand for it by the side of the mother. She puts in the babe, covers it with a

[1] Spencer, F. C., *The Education of the Pueblo Child*, pp. 29, 51.

blanket, and places at its right side an ear of corn, if it is a girl, or three plumules of corn, if it is a boy.[1] That these are ostensibly religious ceremonies is indicated by their definitely prescribed character, and by the various symbolic acts, such as the placing of the corn by the child, which are intermingled with the more useful expedients. In fact, the clearly practical and the symbolic are so fused that we cannot doubt that the *whole* forms a religious ceremony, and is not merely a *mixture* of useful and religious acts. The time of the birth of a child is apparently, among most peoples, a time of considerable emotional suspense, as is proved by the almost universal prevalence of some sort of natal observances. Under such conditions, the specifically useful duties of the attendants would acquire a special import and would be fused with various symbolic acts into a solemn ceremonial.

There is a suggestion of the 'practical' in the method prescribed by religion by which the Wichita construct their lodges. The rules are very definite; one of them provides that there be east and west doors, that the sun may look in at its rising and setting, and a hole at the top (for smoke, but ostensibly that the sun may also look in at noon). There is also a south door, which is unused, but is retained that the south wind may enter. Both the sun and the south wind are of importance to the agricultural Wichita, and are consequently deities, or are at least possessed of powers which make them objects of worship. The fireplace in the lodge is also an object of reverence, for here offerings are made, food is cooked, and medicine is heated.[2] It would seem that these and other elements

[1] Mrs. M. C. Stevenson, "The religious life of the Zuñi child," *The Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology;* cf. Mrs. Stevenson's later study of the Zuñi, *Twenty-third Annual Report, Bureau Ethnology*, especially pp. 294–303.

[2] Dorsey, "The mythology of the Wichita," *Carnegie Institution Publication*, No. 21, pp. 4, 5.

of household construction and economy have in the first place been determined by their usefulness, and that, because they remained so fixed and were at the same time more or less constantly in the field of attention in connection with the objects (*e.g.* the sun and the south wind) which brought to them success in agriculture, they become an additional means of communication with the powers above.

The religious dances and festivals of the Iroquois [1] were quite clearly of a social and semi-practical character. Thus, the war and feather dances were dramatic rehearsals of the ways real problems were in a measure met. The festivals of the Maple, of the Planting, of the Strawberry, the Green-corn, the Harvest, and the New Year, may be regarded as primarily cycles of activities grouped about important economic events in the life of the tribe, having possibly as their object the better control of the events which they preceded or clustered about, but they were in great measure perpetuated because they were the outlets of strong social impulses and emotional tensions which would at such times be aroused.

These same types of activity, occurring among peoples of lower grades of social organization, often seem to possess little value beyond that of play or social intercourse. Whether their apparent lack of a religious quality is due to defective social structure, of course cannot be fully determined, for the interrelations are too complicated for analysis, even if we had a perfect account of all the elements involved. But even if we cannot make a precise correlation between the social body and the greater or less religiosity of these activities, they are at least of great interest as showing how, taken in and of themselves, a particular type of activity may possess all grades of value, from the purely social to the highly religious. The Thompson Indians furnish good illustrations of this type

[1] Lewis H. Morgan, *League of the Iroquois.*

of activity on what is apparently a purely social level. Their social organization, Teit says,[1] was very loose, neither band nor village forming a permanent social unit. There was no line of chiefs, the leaders being merely those preëminent in bravery or influence, temporary chiefs being appointed for ceremonies, hunts, or war parties. These had no characteristic dress or insignia. The tribe also had no totems, except in the case of two families who were descended from coast tribes. They had many social customs, which seem, however, to have been more social than religious. Thus they were especially fond of gathering for feasts and for the attendant social intercourse. It is not clear from Teit's account just which of their feasts were in a degree religious. All of them, he says, apparently held uppermost the idea of good fellowship. Many were simply social gatherings, called, for instance, by one family when it chanced to have a large supply of food, that it might show its liberality and good-will. Feasts were also given when one family visited another. There were also social gatherings called *potlaches*, at which there was a general distribution of presents by a wealthy individual or family. All of these customs were so definitely fixed that their observance was certainly a phase of tribal good form, if not of tribal morality and religion. At any rate, they are interesting as showing a rudimentary stage in the development of real religious feasts. The social gatherings of the Greenlanders are of the same character. Other phases of the Thompson Indians' religious beliefs and practices do not particularly concern us here, and will be discussed in another connection.

Very distinctly social festivities accompany the sacred rite of the eating of the white buffalo among the Uncapapa, and here, again, it is conceivable that the purely social side is pri-

[1] James Teit, "The Thompson Indians," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. II, *Anthropology*, I, pp. 289 ff.

mary, while the religious element is derived from it. Among the Wakamba, an African tribe described by Decle, there is little social organization, the chief having only nominal power. The tribe is scattered about in tiny villages, and has no definite religious belief nor regular ritual. These people offer interesting illustrations, however, of practices which are more practical and social than religious. The following is a practical expedient in which the group joins when it faces the crisis of a drought, and which partakes of the character of a religious ceremony. On such an occasion the elders hold a meeting and then take a calabash of cider and a goat to a certain kind of tree. The goat is there killed, but not eaten.[1] Their dances are still more deficient in definite religious quality. They occur chiefly among the young men and women and are impromptu and sportive rather than ceremonial in character. It is instructive to compare such groups as these with others of a more highly socialized character, such as the Pueblo, among whom *all* dances, sports, and economic activities are undertaken in a definitely religious frame of mind. The Matabele, another of the tribes described by Decle, have some dances with a religious significance, as the one before harvest, in which many villages join. Here the political organization is definite, and centralized under an absolute ruler.[2]

The Korenas, whom Stow [3] describes as having no religious rites, not even that of circumcision, had, nevertheless, the beginnings or the remnants of such rites in the feast given by the father of a boy entering manhood. In other words, the elaborate initiation ceremonies of some peoples here occur in only rudimentary or vestigial form, and as such are seen to

[1] Decle, Lionel, *Three Years in Savage Africa*, pp. 485 ff.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 150 ff.
[3] *Native Races of South Africa*, p. 272.

be merely social festivities. Here, again, we get the suggestion that complex initiation rites may all, originally, have been such social occasions arising at a period of life which would naturally be of considerable interest to the family and the group.

The Hottentots had moonlight dances which are variously described as ceremonial and as merely for pleasure.[1] Stow, also, describes at some length the moonlight dances of the Bushmen.[2] He says the brilliancy of the moonlight in those latitudes renders the night, after the burning heat of the day, a very natural occasion for social enjoyment and sport. The Bushmen were passionately fond of dancing, especially during the light nights of the month. The Bushmen dances seem to have been of every grade, from the spontaneous overflow of animal spirits to those of a clearly religious character. Stow's account is so suggestive that it is worth quoting in some detail. Dancing was their chief diversion, and was indulged in upon every fitting occasion. The "universality of the custom was shown from the fact that in the early days, in the centre of every village, or kraal, or near every rock shelter, and in every great cave, were places where either the grass or ground was beaten flat and bare from the frequent repetition of their dances." "It was when food was abundant, after having eaten, that they gave rein to their favorite amusement. Feasting and festivity were ever accompanied with continuous dancing and rejoicing from the close of evening to the dawn of the returning day." "They had special seasons when the dance was never neglected, such as the time of the new and full moon. Dancing began with the new moon as an expression of joy that the dark nights had ended, and

[1] Cf. Theal, *The Portuguese in South Africa*, and Napier, *Excursions in Southern Africa*, p. 59.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 111 ff.

was continued at the full moon, that they might avail themselves of the delicious coolness after the heat of the day, and the brilliancy of the moonlight in this particular portion of the southern hemisphere. It is probable that similar practices in a remote period gave rise, among some of the nations of antiquity, to their feasts and festivals of the new and full moon, which, as they emerged from the primitive barbarism of their ancestors, became connected in their observance with a number of religious rites and ceremonies." Stow apparently possessed an acquaintance with these rapidly disappearing people such as no one else has ever gained, and his description of their customs, as well as his comment thereon, are the more interesting. His remarks upon the moonlight dances are entirely in line with the theory of primitive religion here presented. We should say, however, that such purely playful dancing became not merely connected with religious rites and ceremonies, but that it itself *became* religious ceremonial, and in a measure helped to develop the religious consciousness.

There were other times of interest to the Bushmen, such as the approach of the first thunder-storm of the season, when they were particularly joyful because it was a token of the commencement of summer. "In the midst of their excessive rejoicing they tore in pieces their skin coverings, threw them into the air, and danced for several nights in succession. Some tribes made great outcries, accompanied with dancing and playing upon their drums." As the season advanced, some of the terrific storms aroused their dread, and "among some of the tribes this culminated in fits of impotent rage, as if the war of elements excited their indignation against the mysterious power which they supposed was the cause of it." Here, again, is a situation which would furnish a basis for developing some aspect of the religious attitude. The emotions and acts aroused by great storms would become associated in the

minds of the people with these phenomena, and eventually symbolize their human value or significance. Such spontaneous acts of terror could become in time the ritual by which a storm deity would be appeased or invoked.

Many of the Bushmen dances were, in a way, games, and required of their performers considerable skill, some of which were for women and others for men. They had competitive dances of a stated character for the women, and a dance for men who were distinguished for their manly qualities. There was also a hunting dance with bows and arrows, and in the case of others the participants were disguised as animals, and took the greatest delight in imitating the noises and movements of those which were well known to them. Thus, there was a baboon, a frog, and a bee dance. Some of these had more or less religious or at least mythological significance, but their merely play value is so evident that we can scarcely avoid the belief that they grew directly out of an impulse to imitate the drolleries or striking peculiarities of these animals. We gradually pass from these activities, in which the sportive element seems to predominate, to others of a more religious character. Thus, there were dances for those who were to be initiated, also national, various phallic, and blood dances. There was certainly no sharply dividing line between the religious and the non-religious in these cases. In all, the social and play elements were prominent. Their fondness for this diversion as mere sport suggests that their ceremonial dances were specializations from a perfectly spontaneous manifestation of primitive joyousness, which still persisted as a sort of background or matrix for their truly ceremonial activities, and served to keep alive the spirit expressed in them. In short, the great significance of the Bushmen in this connection is that their dancing had not entirely lost its purely play value, and continued to exist, on the whole, as a much

more general form of activity than can be accounted for on the basis of religious ceremonial alone. They danced, in the first place, because they were *glad* for the light, because they were refreshed by the coolness of the nights, or because of an abundance of food after times of scarcity. Among other primitive peoples these same activities came, in many instances, to express to their doers some sort of ultimate worthfulness. That is, the meaning of their lives, as far as they were able to conceive it, was in some way bound up with the moon, with the sun, with certain natural phenomena such as storms, or with food itself; and as a consequence, the activities, which had gradually crystallized about these intense centres of interest, since they were literally the expression of the relation of the people to these things and were the only means by which they could think of that relation — these activities, we repeat, became religious ceremonials in the true sense. We insist that only that can be considered of value which either potentially or actually *does* excite some sort of reaction in the person recognizing the value and that the value is, of necessity, conceived in terms of this active relationship. Aside from such relations, a value cannot be stated or even conceived. The whole case is tersely summarized by Stow in these words: —

"From this [*i.e.* the preceding description] we seem to learn something of the primitive ideas, which became more and more elaborated, until dancing was looked upon as a religious ceremony."

Another excellent example of the transformation of a practical act into one having religious significance is furnished by the Japanese and their customs relating to uncleanness. In Shinto actual personal dirt is worse than moral guilt. To be dirty is to be disrespectful to the gods.[1] It seems to the

[1] Aston, *Shinto, the Way of the Gods.*

present writer that we have here a purely social habit become a genuinely religious act; in other words, that the *habit* of cleanliness has become so thoroughly ingrained into Japanese character that it is now conceived as a religious duty. What the exact social conditions were that made them hold the need of cleanliness so constantly and vividly in attention, we probably can never fully determine; but, from all we know of primitive religion, it seems, as we have said, that it is a case of social habit acquiring religious value, rather than a habit enjoined by a preëxisting conception of religious propriety. In the case of this habit the practical connection with the decent conduct of life seems quite evident, but in the case of many religious duties (we speak generally, not of the Japanese in particular), and especially in the case of such complicated ones as ceremonials, the primitive relation which probably existed between them and the ordinary activities of the group is lost.

It is easy to see how, on purely psychological grounds, that which has lost its direct connection with life may persist according to the law of habit. When this is the case, it is natural to refer the practice back to whatever conceptions seem to the people to be ultimate, that is, least susceptible of analysis. Every individual and every people possess a more or less definite substratum of axioms or postulates beyond which they do not attempt to go. (This is, of course, itself one of the subtle results of what may be called our habit-forming capacity and need not here be further discussed.) The North American Indians refer many of their customs to their culture-heroes; the Israelites believed that all their religious rites were instituted by Moses; the Central Australians regard the statement, 'It was so in the Alcheringa' [*i.e.* among their half-human ancestors], as entirely final; the Todas, similarly, explain, ultimately, nearly all their ceremonies and customs by saying that they were so ordained by their chief deity,

Teikirzi.[1] For precisely the same psychological reasons one of us may account for the evil in an act by saying that it is prohibited by one of the Ten Commandments, or is not in accord with the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, or we may use as our ultimate postulate the moral imperative, the Good, or the Good-will, while, as a matter of fact, in every case, the act, in so far as it is not the outcome of reflective morality, had originally some definite social context in which it had either practical value, or was related to some of the accessory activities of a social group. Of course, true reflective morality simply recognizes the social criterion as the really ultimate one, and attempts actively to reconstruct conduct on this basis instead of leaving it to the slow action of unconscious selection.

Referring again to Shinto, it is interesting to note that it furnishes a type of illustration analogous to that of the Bushmen. There seem to be all gradations of Shinto festivals, from the purely social to the clearly religious, but in *all* the note of social enjoyment is quite easily detected.[2] Some of them seem to be little more than special occasions when people call upon their friends for the exchange greetings of good-will.

Thus, Kaempfer, writing in the year 1690, says: "Perhaps [Shinto] would not have stood its ground so long had it not been for its close connection with civil customs, in the observation of which this nation is exceedingly nice and scrupulous."[3] "It is observable, in general, that their festivals and holidays are days sacred rather to mutual compliments and civilities than to acts of holiness and devotion. Another name for them is *visiting days*."[4] The same observer says of their monthly

[1] W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 186.

[2] See E. Kaempfer, *History of Japan*, 1690–1692, Glasgow, 1906, Vol. II, and Aston, *Shinto*.

[3] Kaempfer, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 21. Italics ours.

and yearly festivals that they are little more than times of social rejoicing; that New Year's Day, the most solemn of all their festival seasons, was then spent in visiting and complimenting each other. Aston says that Shinto is a reflection of the dominant mood of a sociable, enjoyment-loving race. So essentially is it a religion of gratitude and love that the demons of disease and calamity are mostly obscure and nameless. In other words, we may say that the pleasures of social intercourse have become so much a matter of attention, and have furnished such an all-important nucleus for habit and custom, that it has come to be, or to express, to the Japanese the very centre and meaning of life. As we have already held, when this stage is reached, the habits and customs, in terms of which alone this value can be thought, become true religious ceremonials. An excellent illustration of a social act transformed into a religious rite appears in the festival of Nifu Moojin in Kü. When the procession bearing offerings arrives before the shrine, the village chief calls out in a loud voice, "According to our annual custom, let us laugh." [1]

Our general point finds further exemplification in Shinto offerings. The earliest of these were portions of the ordinary meal set apart in grateful recognition of the source from which it came. "The primary and most important form of offering is food and drink." [2] Religious expression in the form of sacrifice would seem also to be the outgrowth of the ordinary activities of this naturally sociable people. The giving of food and drink, or other articles, would be originally a natu-

[1] Aston, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 211 ff. Aston does not believe, as far as Shinto is concerned, that the core of worship is communion. Communion, as he says, is out of the question when the offering is of implements or of clothing. Even in the case of food, there is, in Shinto, no evidence of a joint participation in the living flesh and blood of a sacred victim. *Op. cit.*, p. 211.

ral expression of social regard and, when customs generally became in a measure religious ceremonies, this particular aspect of social regard would also have its place as one phase of religious expression. The offering of food, drink, and clothing would symbolize most vividly to them certain elements of their appreciative attitude toward that social 'concept' which seemed to express most fully to them the meaning of their lives. The later forms of Shinto sacrifice, of which some are expiatory, some rewards for services, some given to close bargains for future benefits, and some propitiatory, are also closely analogous to, if not the direct outcome of, acts which would easily arise within a social group. Such offerings rest at least upon the assumption that the spirit world is more or less continuous with the social *milieu* of the worshipper, and that it consequently requires the same sort of conduct as is required within the visible social body. We are predisposed to think, however, that these sacrificial acts are the actual remnants of reactions to concrete social problems, the exact nature of which has long been lost, although their *general* character is quite evident. In that case they would directly illustrate our point that religious ceremonies are in many cases, if not in all, due to the persistence in the social body of various practical and play activities which have accumulated about its most absorbing objects of attention.

A social activity connected with a time of some tension or excitement is the Kafir custom reported by McDonald. When a thunder-storm is seen approaching, the whole village, led by the medicine-man, will rush to the nearest hill and yell at the hurricane to divert it from its course.[1] Here is the sort of activity which might, and in all probability does, furnish the starting-point for a religious ceremony in the worship of a storm-god or other natural phenomenon.

[1] *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XIX, p. 283.

Stow says of the Bushmen's custom of placing stones upon the graves of the dead, that it might originally have been adopted to prevent wild beasts from getting at the bodies, and that it was finally regarded as demanded by the spirit of the deceased, thus becoming an imperative duty for the passer-by to add to the pile, as this secured to him and his family the favor of the spirit.[1] Here, again, is a custom well on the way toward a religious rite in the worship of the dead, or, if the dead should be forgotten, a ritual connected with a sacred place. The development of the idea that the spirit required this service would come quite naturally when, for any cause, the original necessity was less keenly felt, and, even if they remained fully conscious of its relation to wild beasts, it would be easy for the idea to arise that the spirit demanded the rite.

A case similar to the preceding ones is that of the naming of the chief's son among the Kayans, when the whole village is called together for what is ostensibly a religious rite, and incidentally a season of merrymaking.[2]

The transformation of practical acts into religious ones through the medium of habit has no more striking illustration than that furnished by the Todas with their dairy religion.[3] What the original Toda religion was we cannot determine with certainty. They have now somewhat vague beliefs regarding certain deities, beliefs which were quite possibly at some time in the past much more definite. This condition probably existed before they came to their present country in the Nilgiri Hills of southern India. The significance of the changes which have probably taken place in Toda religion we shall take up in connection with the general problem of the

[1] Stow, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

[2] Furness, *The Head Hunters*, p. 18.

[3] The great wealth of material regarding Toda religion and social organization made available by W. H. R. Rivers's recent work, *The Todas*, is sufficient excuse for the extended references we shall make to this unique people.

evolution of religion. It is sufficient here to note that most of the attention of the Todas has in some way been diverted from their older belief, and has come to be centred upon the care of their buffaloes. It is not strange that this is the case, since their subsistence is almost entirely gained from these animals. They have, it is true, an annual ceremony for increasing the supply of honey and fruit, indicating that at some period they must have been considerably dependent upon these things. Since, however, these are not any longer important articles of food to the Todas, very little interest is taken in the ceremony.[1]

Whether their religion is rudimentary, as some hold, or rather degenerate, as Rivers thinks, there is no question that at present they are absorbingly interested in their buffaloes. The buffalo is a sacred animal, though not worshipped. The most sacred places are certain of their dairies; their most sacred objects are the utensils of the sacred dairies, and particularly the bells worn by the buffaloes. The dairy building is the nearest approach to a temple, and the dairyman is practically a priest. He can enter upon his duties only after certain ordination ceremonies, varying with the sanctity of the dairy in which he is to minister. During the period of his service he must observe as strict rules to maintain his ceremonial cleanliness as does many a real priest of a higher cult. In fact, they have few religious acts entirely divorced from their practical interest in the care of the buffalo and the securing of milk, *i.e.* they have no idols, images, no sacred objects apart from the dairy, no dreaded supernatural beings to be appeased, and no sacrifices beyond eating a little buffalo meat at stated intervals, or drinking fresh milk on certain occasions. Although they owe no duties to a deity, "yet," as Marshall says,[2]

[1] Rivers, p. 290.

[2] Marshall, *A Phrenologist among the Todas*, 1873, p. 129.

"they hold to certain practices and habits in daily life, which are to them in the place of religion, being performed with all the strictness and certainty which should be bestowed on sacred observances." These practices are intimately allied with the care and distribution of that divine fluid, milk. As Rivers says, "In the Toda rites and ceremonies is little else than the arrangements which a pastoral and communistic people have made for the provision and care of an article of food." [1]

In general, then, it seems that we have in the Todas a unique illustration of how the habits of a group of people, habits which have originated in some practical interest, may become of such great importance that they are true religious ceremonies. Moreover, if our principles of interpretation are true, these very habits have served to enhance the value, the sanctity, of the object about which they have gathered, if they have not actually produced it. We believe the Todas illustrate these points, even though there are some of their buffaloes which are not sacred, or rather some of the dairies are not sacred (for the sanctity of the buffalo seems to depend at present upon its being connected with a sacred dairy), and even though there are all degrees of sanctity in these various things. The initial causes of these valuations we may never be able to determine, but at least we do know that sanctity, as far as it is recognized by them at all, is definitely related to their dominant economic pursuit.

If we were to analyze the development of the present religious ideas of the Todas and the relation of these ideas to their everyday life, we believe that the following hypotheses would be fully in accord with the facts as at present observed. In the first place, it is evident that their current religious system is not their original one, for they have vague beliefs in a body

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 130, 186.

of deities which have probably come down to them from a time when their life was quite different from what it now is. These gods seem to be becoming less and less important; they are stranded, as it were, in a new social order.[1] The only deity who has retained any considerable importance is Teikirzi, the one to whom they trace most of their dairy ceremonials. Some of the other deities are supposed to have lived upon the earth and to have been dairymen. That is, the Todas' most definite ideas regarding their gods are those concerning their relationship to the social order under which the people now live. In so far as they have been able to throw the old gods into relation with their new conditions of life, they have kept them fairly definite, but even thus, they seem to be little more than intellectual concepts, or postulates, certainly not objects of worship. The real object of the Todas' valuational consciousness is the milk and the dairy. It is uncertain whether the milk or the buffalo was the original object of their sacred regard, but that is not here a matter of great importance, since we wish simply to show how *one* of their objects of reverential regard assumed its present importance. If the buffalo were first regarded as sacred, it is natural that the fluid given by the buffalo would acquire by association a like value. But its sacredness would be greatly enhanced if it came to be the *chief* source of their livelihood. This would make it an object of solicitous attention, and every act connected with the procuring and care of it would likewise become an object of interest. If, for any other reason, the killing of the female buffalo had been tabooed, their hesitation at doing such a thing would now be much increased by the fact of their dependence upon

[1] "I think there can be little doubt that most of the individual gods of the Todas are becoming very unreal beings to those who talk of them. The stories of the earlier gods are now forgotten, and the ideas of the Todas about them are very vague." Rivers, *op. cit.*, pp. 451 f.

the buffalo's milk. Granted, then, that the milk becomes a matter of great moment to them because of its economic importance, it is easy to see how its value could be indefinitely increased by the habits arising in the care of it. Only let the idea arise that a certain thing has great worth, and secondary processes will be set up which will make the value greater than ever. That is, when the worth of an object is once established by its relation to a group's practical and social life, it thereby gains enough internal momentum to go on increasing, in relative independence of practical and social interests. This is certainly true regarding milk among the Todas. When this article of food acquires considerable value, both because of its practical importance and because of the primary adjustments necessitated in caring for it, situations repeatedly arise which necessitate secondary adjustments in order that due regard may be shown to this preëxisting sanctity, or in order that it may be preserved intact in the new relations, or that no injury may come to its possessors when its sanctity is in a way violated, as, for instance, when it is removed from its accustomed environment. These secondary processes, designed to preserve the value, not only accomplish that end, but even greatly enhance it.

Thus, much of the dairy ritual has grown up as a means of counteracting the danger involved in giving the sacred substance, milk, to peoples whom they regard as inferior beings. "Similarly, the migration ceremonies have the general underlying idea of counteracting any possible evil influence which may accompany the passage of the buffaloes through the profane world from one sacred place to another. During the migration, certain utensils may be seen by the multitude which, under ordinary circumstances, are strictly screened from the general gaze, and objects may be touched, or be in danger of being touched, by people who ordinarily may not even see

them. Again, the ceremonies connected with entrance upon any dairy office are intended to purify the candidate and make him fit to see and touch and use the sacred objects." [1] These are all the crude attempts of a primitive people to effect what is, for them, a very practical end, and the 'secondary processes,' as we have called them, aroused by the social interest in the object, serve to increase that interest, and hence to enhance the value of the object itself.

The Todas have other ceremonies which are directly connected with seasons of stress or of emotional tension. They are distinctly social in character, and they may thus be supposed to be the outcome of these psychological conditions rather than to have been caused by any original religious motive. Among these may be mentioned the *Irpalvusthi* ceremony, which occurs about the fifteenth day after the birth of a calf. It strongly resembles a sacrificial or thanksgiving feast; the dairyman performs elaborate ceremonies in connection with the calf and its mother; the people assemble in large numbers and partake of the fresh milk of the buffalo, a thing not done on any other occasion. From this time the calf is allowed to run with the others, and the buffalo is milked with the rest of the herd. This festival, in which the people partake of the milk of a sacred animal, bears an interesting analogy to sacrificial feasts of some other peoples, in which the sacred animal itself is consumed.[2]

The giving of salt to the buffaloes occurs at stated intervals, and is accompanied with a definite ceremonial. Rivers thinks it points to a time when salt was difficult to obtain.[3] If this were ever the case, the giving of salt would naturally have been an event of some importance, and would easily serve as a centre about which habits would cluster. Certain of the

[1] Rivers, *op. cit.*, p. 231. [2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 172–175, also p. 241.
[3] *Op. cit.*, pp. 175, 232.

Toda sacrifices can be rather clearly traced back to some sort of purely practical social custom. In certain Toda clans the offering of a buffalo as an atonement for some sin is made from one division of the clan to another. "It seems that we have in these offerings a good example of something which is midway between a social regulation of the nature of punishment and a definite religious rite of propitiation of higher powers." [1] This seems the more likely in view of the fact that there are some other types of offerings, closely related to the foregoing, and, in fact, designated by the same name, in which the religious and sacrificial character is quite clear. That is, the buffalo, instead of being given to another division of the clan, is given to a *ti*, the most sacred type of Toda dairy. The animal is not killed, but on entering the sacred herd it is devoted to the service of the gods. If the clan divisions are primary, Rivers thinks that the offering made to the *ti* dairies may be an example of what was originally a mere social regulation transformed into a religious rite. That is, "religious sanction has been added to the system of social punishment, which seems to be all which clearly exists in the offerings, when these are kept within the clan." [2]

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 311.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 312. The author thinks, however, that it may be possible that the Toda religion has degenerated, and hence that the whole mechanism of clan divisions (kudr) "is a device by which offerings which should be made to a higher power may remain the property of the clan.

"The fact that the giving of the buffalo or other offering is accompanied by prayer, and the various restrictions of a more or less religious nature which accompany the ceremonial, show that, at the present time, the ceremony has in all cases a very definite religious character; but it is quite possible to regard these features in two ways, either as accretions to a system of social punishment, or as vestiges of what was once a purely religious sacrifice in which the offerings were given to the gods" (p. 312). While we must not ignore the possibility of the second interpretation, it seems scarcely possible that an offering to the gods should deteriorate into just such a form. The first view seems to the present writer far the more plausible of the two.

It is very significant that most of the Toda offering ceremonies are closed by feasts, and also that they all involve prescribed activities on the part of the whole clan.[1] The offerings are distinctly clan affairs; that is, they are *social ceremonies*.

It is impossible to separate the purely 'practical' from the 'accessory' in any examination of the origin of religious activities. So great is the exuberance of human impulse, that accessory activities constantly and inevitably cluster about our practical adjustments, often resulting in a union so intimate that it is impossible, even in ourselves, to separate them. So, in all the activities of primitive peoples, we find, intermingled with the direct responses to the demands of the life-process, multitudes of play activities, festivities of various kinds, all bearing witness to the fact that the *life*-process is a *social* process, and that after its most insistent demands are in a measure satisfied, the activities it calls forth are functionally valuable not merely as means for preserving life, but in greater and greater degree as means of social intercourse.

The life of the primitive Semites, as reconstructed by W. Robertson Smith and G. A. Barton, is very pertinent in this connection. Barton brings forward much evidence to prove that their religion was definitely related to the form of social organization that prevailed among them, which, in turn, can be connected in many ways with the fundamental problems of the life-process as they came to consciousness among these peoples. Many of their religious rites, Barton says, spring out of the prominence among them 'of the mother and the institutions of maternal kinship . . . as well as their tendency to unregulated intercourse and the important functions of the date palm.[2] As has already been pointed out, the gathering of a clan on an oasis to harvest the dates was to it a time of

[1] Rivers, *op. cit.*, p. 302.
[2] *Semitic Origins*, p. 82.

great importance, necessitating not only organization for the purpose of harvesting, but also for the purpose of maintaining their rights to the oasis against the encroachments of hostile clans. The very act of gathering the dates was a religious one. Out of this primitive situation grew various festivals and sacrifices, all of which were originally connected with practical ends, and had their development, no doubt, facilitated by the fact that they furnished important avenues for social intercourse.

Here, then, are a whole series of acts, useful from the Semitic point of view, and centring about the objects and processes most prominently in their field of attention. But inasmuch as they are acts performed by a social group, they inevitably acquire an added value, namely, as media of social intercourse. In other words, the fundamental expedients of the life-process, because they are of necessity carried on by groups of people, naturally gain many accretions from these people's social and play impulses, and these accretions may become of almost more importance than the fundamental acts about which they gather, even to the extent of obliterating them. Thus, among the Semites of historic times we find circumcision festivals, which, while partly social gatherings and occasions of social intercourse, probably grew out of a cycle of activities, including the sacrifice of sheep and the dancing of girls, and had as its objective point the more adequate control of the principle of fertility, especially within the clan. It was, in a sense, the mating period of the group, a time when the young men chose wives.[1] The religious rite of the Passover finally emerged as a generalized and reduced form of the springtime celebration of fertility, which was not altogether a celebration of fertility but a group of social activities necessary to insure the permanence of the clan. Just as the spring

[1] Barton, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

had its cycle of activities, which in time became religious ceremonies, so did the periods of harvest. Here also festivals of a religious character grew out of the primitive customs connected with gathering the fruit of the date palm.

We should bear in mind, throughout this inquiry, that in every religious rite there are two elements to be distinguished; namely, the form and the content. The first element is determined by the structure of the worshipping body; that is, it is one of the acts or adjustments of that body. The *content* of the rite, on the other hand, by which we mean the objects with which it is concerned and toward which it is directed, is determined by whatever figures most prominently in the field of attention. For instance, two primitive Semitic divinities, Ishtar and Tammuz, stood for certain objective interests of these peoples, interests which depended upon their material environment. "Ishtar was originally a water goddess, the divinity of some never-failing spring or springs, and some sacred tree to which the spring gave life represented her son. . . ." [1] If the attention of the Semitic clans had centred about *other* objects, the content of their worship would have been different. But even a different content could be approached from the same angle, or through the same social machinery. Both the 'form' and the 'content' stand for values, the first originating in the reacting organism, the latter in the environment of this organism. (This holds true, even though it be admitted that the type of organism is itself ultimately determined by the natural environment.) Thus, phallic worship is probably immediately due to the type of social organization itself, while the particular content in which it finds expression will depend upon the objects of the natural environment which are prominently thrust upon the attention. Barton holds that some form of phallicism underlies early

[1] Barton, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

Semitic religion. This particular form of religion we attribute to the type of Semitic social organization, while the presence in attention of the date palm, with its striking method of fertilization, and of flocks with the necessary interest in their breeding, furnished a 'content' of a particular kind to this phallicism. The particular environmental interests furnished the specific concepts and ceremonial acts which gave body to their fundamental interest in the reproductive functions. In general, then, it may be important to bear in mind these two classes of factors when we attempt to interpret the religious practices and beliefs of certain groups. At any given time, the religious activities of a people are not determined alone by the stimuli of the social and physical environment, but are determined as well by the specific character of the reacting organism itself. It is the incompleteness of our information regarding primitive religion and primitive social organization that renders it difficult to go very far in such an analysis of elements.

That the religious is secondary to a social process of some sort originating in some other than a religious need, but becoming the ground for the development of the religious as such, finds further illustration in such instances as the following: In the first place may be mentioned many of the elaborate ceremonials of certain North American Indian tribes, for example, the Snake Dance of the Moqui and the Mountain Chant of the Navaho. The latter consists of a great cycle of activities which are undoubtedly of a religious character. That they originated, however, in a practical problem and have been perpetuated and developed because they were important avenues of social intercourse and recreation seems highly probable. Their ostensible object is to cure disease in some member of the tribe who asks to have the ceremony performed and bears the expenses incident to it.

The cure is effected in connection with the dramatic rehearsal of a complicated myth regarding the migrations of a family, the escape of a son from the hostile Ute, his protection and succor by various gods and animals until he reaches his kindred. It seems to us immaterial, as far as our present problem is concerned, whether we regard this myth as explanatory of the rites of the ceremony, or whether the rites are dramatizations of a preëxisting myth. Whichever is primary, each has without doubt reacted upon the other. The significant points, to which we would here call attention, are these: Although the ostensible purpose is to cure disease in an individual, it is also the occasion for invoking the unseen powers in behalf of the people at large for various purposes, such as good crops and abundant rains. The rehearsal of this myth occupies more or less the whole group for nine days; it has its stated season, the winter-time, when the thunder is silent and the rattlesnakes are hibernating. In this respect, and also in the minute observance of detail it involves, as well as in the more obvious intent of the ceremony to please the gods or obtain favors of them, it is clear that the whole cycle is religious. It is also equally full of the dramatic and play spirit, and the merely social function is extremely obvious. It is an occasion when the people gather to have a jolly time.[1] Do we not have here a series of ceremonies which are primarily expressions of the social and play impulses and secondarily religious?

The Snake Dance of the Moqui seems to be an illustration of the same point. Its object is to insure abundant rains for the following season, while the social and dramatic element is also very marked. It seems possible to say that it too was first of all an adjustment to a practical problem, and

[1] Washington Matthews, "The Mountain Chant of the Navaho," *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, pp. 386 f.

that it furnished a nucleus for a large number of accessory activities from which the religious values have developed.[1]

As Jevons says[2] in another connection, "Ceremonies which were used for the purpose of rainmaking [*i.e.*, purely practical expedients] before rain was recognized as the gift of the gods, [may] continue for a time to be practised as the proper rites with which to approach the god of the community or the rain god in particular." This significant statement of Jevons we should be inclined to generalize and apply to all sorts of activities occurring within the social group. Thus, may we not with reason suppose that the elaborate ceremonies and regulations observed by the coast tribes of British Columbia,[3] with reference to the first salmon of the season, were primarily practical expedients, — as they saw it, — intermingled with a certain amount of playfulness, the whole object of which was to insure a good catch? If they had developed a definite deity or a salmon-god, these expedients would have become quite naturally a part of his ritual.

It is in the primitive religion of the Romans, however, that some of the most striking illustrations may be found of this relation of religious ceremonial to antecedent 'practical' and 'accessory' activities. The popular mind is so possessed with the idea that Roman religion was merely a duplicate of that of the Greeks that it is something of a surprise to learn that the deistic ideas of the early Romans were most vague, while the ritualistic side of their religion was, on the contrary, elaborate and important. Fowler says that in the oldest festivals the deities are "either altogether doubtful, or so wanting in clearness and prominence as to be subordinate in interest to the details of the ceremony. . . . The cult appealed to

[1] Bourke, *The Snake Dance of the Moqui.*

[2] *Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion*, pp. 91 f.

[3] James Teit, *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. II, "The Thompson Indians," p. 349.

this people as the practical method of obtaining their desires, but the unseen powers with whom they dealt in this cult were beyond their ken, often unnamed." [1] In many of their festivals we find the occupations of the family and the various "processes and perils of pastoral and agricultural industry" clearly represented.[2]

In the native Roman religion, in fact, we may find almost our whole theory of the origin and development of religion clearly illustrated. To start with, they had the primitive interests in food and in the family, and about these interests various activities, of necessity, sprang up. These acts served not merely to express but also to enhance the interests, and they seem in time to have become true religious ceremonies. One or two illustrations from many will suffice. The importance of the family in the life of the early Romans is well known. As such it called forth many activities which expressed and emphasized the values of the household. Two of their objects of especial attention were the doorway and the hearth. As Fowler says, the entrance to the house was "the dangerous point, where both evil men and evil spirits might find a way in." Hence to the father of the family naturally belonged the care of the doorway, and from this arose his function of the priest of Janus.[3] We cannot doubt that the ritual of the worship of Janus developed from the expedients used by the father to protect his dwelling from all evil. We may assume, also, that these acts antedated the conception of a god of entrances, and that through them such a concept was actually built up. The very vagueness of the idea of this god, even with the Romans themselves, indicates that their interest was rather in the concrete values

[1] Fowler, *Roman Festivals*, p. 337.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 335.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 288.

associated with the doorway and in the practical expedients necessary in guarding it. Thus the generalized worship of Janus as the god of beginnings sprang not from the personification of "an abstract idea of beginning . . . but from the concrete fact that the entrance to the house was the *initium*, or beginning of the house, and at the same time the point from which you started on all undertakings." [1]

The worship of Vesta, the goddess of the hearth, illustrates the point still further. The hearth was another centre of interest in the primitive household, and the daughters of the house had an important function in keeping the fire always alight, so that, without loss of time, it might be used when needed.[2] All the subsequent development of the Vestal Virgins and their subordination to the pontifex maximus clearly harks back to the place of the daughters in the early Italian household, upon whom devolved the duties about the hearth. The importance of fire for human life may well have made it, in very early times, an object of veneration, and all acts necessary in preserving and using it were consequently more or less religious. Out of the household duties developed the beliefs and ceremonials of the goddess of the hearth. Of the later cult we are told, "The close connection of Vesta and her ministrants with the simple materials and processes of the house and the farm is . . . quite plain; and we may trace it in every rite in which they took part." [3]

The interest of the Romans in the ritual of their religion rather than in their gods suggests that in the former they found real expression for their religious valuations. Moreover, the many obvious connections of the ritual with the practical interests and crises of life and with such social and play activities as arise among the members of a primitive group confirm in a striking way the theory of the natural

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 289. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 147. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 150.

history of religious practices, and with them of the religious attitude, which has been presented in these pages.

It is perhaps unnecessary to give further illustrations. Whether those which have been offered lend genuine support to the thesis of the chapter, the reader will have to judge for himself. If they do not, the multiplication of instances will not be any more convincing. Our attempt has been rather to *illustrate* a point of view than to adduce *all* the evidence in support of it which seems to us to be pertinent. It is needless to say that this evidence might be extended almost indefinitely.

Our conclusion is that the accumulation of habits in various directions is one of the first steps in the evolution of religion. The world for most of us consists primarily of a number of foci of interests. What we apprehend is always related to ourselves more or less directly. This sense of relationship, as we have tried to show, depends quite definitely upon the fact that we are *active* creatures. The first objects of attention come to consciousness because we have been doing something in various instinctive or impulsive ways. These objects develop, their values become more pronounced, as still further adjustments, or modes of behavior, are organized and elaborated about them.

In connection with this development of behavior as influencing the unfolding of interests and values, it will be necessary, however, to take account of another factor, a 'concept,' we may call it, for want of a better term, which has probably played a large part in the unfolding of human thought, and has consequently reacted in important ways upon behavior and custom. It is difficult to relate it exactly to what has thus far been said of the development of the value-consciousness, and yet it has had a part in that development which we trust will not seem to be altogether adventitious, even though we should stand firmly upon the theory as thus far outlined.

This 'concept,' if we may call it such, is not in itself a religious one, although it has been operative, along with other things, in the development of the religious attitude. The notion to which we refer is that there is in the universe, as the primitive man knows it, an undefined and hence more or less impersonal force, a force extremely potent in nature and in the affairs of human life, and with which man may, in various ways, come into *rapport*. To the consideration of the nature, origin, and possible influence of this 'concept,' we shall devote the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI

THE MYSTERIOUS POWER

THE problem of this chapter can best be suggested by the following statement regarding the Algonkin: They possess "an unsystematic belief in a cosmic, mysterious property, which is believed to exist everywhere in nature." This property seems to be an impersonal one, and whenever it is associated with objects in nature, it becomes obscure and confused. While manifesting itself in various ways, its emotional effect is always a sort of sense of mystery.[1] This belief, vague and indefinable as it is in the mind of the man of primitive culture, has consequently been easily misunderstood by those of other cultural levels. This 'mystery' of the Indians was at first identified as a deity, or 'Great Spirit,' and even yet it is extremely difficult for the anthropologist to determine the precise face-value of the concept as held by some North American tribes. The white man's natural tendency seems to be to conceive it in terms of mind, or personality. Thus Brinton, with his mind undoubtedly saturated with Indian beliefs, offers this generalization regarding the basis of religion: "Behind the sensuous, phenomenal world, distinct from it, giving it form, existence, and activity, lies the ultimate, invisible, immeasurable power of Mind, of conscious Will," with which man is in some sort of communication.[2]

That there exists a very widespread belief analogous, if

[1] William Jones, "The Algonkin Manitou," *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. XVIII, p. 190.

[2] *The Religions of Primitive Peoples*, p. 47.

not identical, with the 'mystery' of the North American Indians, the *manitou* of the Algonkin, seems increasingly evident, but that it is a concept of a personal force or agency is more and more open to question. Aston, writing from the point of view of primitive Japanese religion, says: "Primitive man did not think of the world as pervaded by spiritual forces. His attitude was a piecemeal conception of the universe as alive, just as his fellow-man was regarded as alive without being analyzed into soul and body."[1] In general, the belief in this potency, for which there is no suitable single word in English, is well described as follows: "The conception of this something wavers between that of a communicable property, that of a mobile, invisible substance and that of a latent transferable energy; . . . this substance, property, or energy is conceived as being widely diffused amongst natural objects and human beings; . . . the presence of it is promptly assigned as the explanation of any unusual power or efficacy which any object or person is found to possess; . . . the mind of the savage of these races is intensely interested in this force, or property, and greatly preoccupied with the thought of it." It is "a distinct and rather abstract conception of a diffused, all-pervasive, invisible, manipulable, and transferable life-energy, or universal force." "All success, strength, or prosperity is conceived to depend upon the possession of" this force in sufficient quantity.[2]

The science of religion has long been encumbered with such terms as animism, fetichism, totemism, nature, tree, stone, and ancestor worship. They undoubtedly stand for true objective facts, but since they refer only to the *object* of worship, taking no account of the mental attitude expressed by them,

[1] *Shinto*, p. 26.

[2] "The fundamental concept of the primitive philosophy," A. O. Lovejoy, *The Monist*, Vol. XVI, pp. 365, 376.

they have never thrown any light upon the inwardness of primitive religion. We believe it can be shown that the 'concept' of a Mysterious Potency is the key to the real significance of the forms of worship so described, and that it also throws light upon many obscure and curious savage customs. It is an element in the belief of primitive man that we have not thus far taken into explicit account, a belief which possibly has had important influence upon the origin and development of the religious attitude. It is possible that this belief, pervasive as it seems to be, is really the psychical foundation for the so-called 'perception of the infinite,' exploited by some writers, or the 'religious instinct' which others attribute so generally to all men. We shall try to show, however, that this 'concept' is a quite natural result of primitive man's contact with his physical environment. Our first task is to indicate the wide extent to which such a notion prevails among savage peoples, and thereby to gather something more of its meaning.

As already suggested, it is generally present in the thought of the North American Indians, as the fact that it has, in many tribes, a perfectly specific name seems to bear witness. Reference has just been made to the Algonkin *manitou*. As the idea has, through the subjectivity of this people, attained what is possibly the most systematic and developed form in which it is anywhere known, a somewhat detailed description of it will be proper. Those Algonkin peoples that have been most carefully studied [1] conceive it in a vague, naïve manner as a sort of active, cosmic property, or essence, which, although present everywhere, is frequently possessed in preëminent degree by particular objects or persons. The Indian's conception of its nature is never precisely formulated, but is rather to be inferred from what he, in a child-

[1] *Vide* William Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

like way, takes for granted in describing something he does. Thus, according to Dr. Jones, a Fox man comments upon the experience of the sweat lodge as follows: "Often one will cut one's self over the arms and legs, slitting one's self through the skin. It is done to open up many passages for the *manitou* to pass into the body. The *manitou* comes from the place of its abode in the stone. It becomes roused by the heat of the fire, and proceeds out of the stone when the water is sprinkled on it. It comes out in the steam, and in the steam it enters the body wherever it finds entrance. It moves up and down and all over inside the body, driving out everything that inflicts pain. Before the *manitou* returns to the stone, it imparts some of its nature to the body. That is why one feels so well after having been in the sweat lodge." The *manitou* is, then, a virtue which can be transferred from one physical object to another. It is capable of producing not only physical effects but mental ones as well. If a man is brave, or shows any extraordinary quality, it is because he is the possessor of a large measure of this impersonal essence, the *manitou*, and if his enemies kill him and eat his heart, it is to reënforce their own *manitou* with the supernatural quality of their foe, believing implicitly that it will react upon them in the way it has upon him. Whenever anything out of the ordinary happens, or whenever a person manifests a remarkable ability, it is regarded as due to an unusual endowment of *manitou*. It is supposed to show itself in an especial manner through dreams and in the mystic transports which follow long fasts and solitary meditation. It is, therefore, by such means that the youth of these people seek to become endowed with the *manitou*, or at least to put themselves into *rapport* with it. It is important to note that the *manitou* is primarily a mysterious quasi-mechanical essence, the active element in all that is strange, excellent, or powerful. It is equally im-

portant to note that this quality comes by insensible steps to be identified in many cases with the object or person of which it is the vehicle, so that in the end it may be said to be in a measure personified.[1] The belief in this vital quality of things lies at the basis of Algonkin religion and most of its attendant rites and ceremonies. Since all special ability depends upon it, man's most important opportunity is to endeavor to establish and to maintain right relations to it. The emotional effects connected with these ideas and observances are naturally intense and are interpreted by these peoples as evidence that *manitou* has entered into them.[2]

The name of this impersonal potency is, among the Siouan peoples, *wakonda*, or terms closely cognate with it. It is conceived as a power that may reside in the various objects of nature, *e.g.* in the sun, moon, thunder, lightning, stars, winds, plants, animals, and man. An object or man believed to possess that power is said to be *wakonda*. "In addition, the term was applied to mythic monsters of the earth, air, and waters," to fetiches and ceremonial objects and to many places of striking character.[3] The Omaha believed in *wakonda* as a pervasive life in all nature, the animating principle of all phenomena and of human endeavor. There is no evidence that they regarded it as a supreme being; it simply "expressed the Indian's idea of immanent life manifested in all things." It was a subtle bond of life common to man and nature by means of which he could secure from the objects of nature the assistance of their special powers. In other words,

[1] This naïve confusion of property with object is important as an illustration of a possible transition from this primitive force-concept to the notion of spiritual agencies and later of deities. We do not understand that these people have any strictly spiritualistic beliefs.

[2] In part based upon and in part condensed from William Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 183–190.

[3] McGee, *Fifteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, p. 157.

wakonda is productive energy, "that which makes or brings to pass." [1] It also meant, in a vague way, power, sacred, ancient, grandeur, animate, immortal. As in the case of the *manitou* belief, many things are *wakonda*. Whatever attracts attention in any way, or seems associated with any striking occurrence, is thought to possess in some measure this mechanical, impersonal power. The wild animals, especially those characterized by cunning, fleetness, and great strength, were thought to owe it to some peculiarly intimate contact with this power. All human achievement, beyond the most commonplace, was not thought to be due to any special merit in the individual, but solely to his shrewdness or to his luck in making proper connections with *wakonda*. There is no reason in the mind of these people for the masterful progress of the white race other than that they have gotten a better hold upon *wakonda* than has the Indian. Blood, and hence the menstruant woman, is *wakonda*. She radiates danger and also fecundating energy. Here, as Lovejoy holds, possibly may be found the basis of the puzzling sex taboos and of the 'nudity charm.' Among the Omaha, the rules of the buffalo hunt, the consecration of hearts and tongues, ceremonies of anointing the sacred pole, planting corn, and many other details of the ceremonial life relate to the securing or making of proper contacts with *wakonda*.[2]

To the Dakota, the common whirlwind, for instance, is peculiarly endowed with *wakonda*, and whenever a man or animal makes a motion analogous to the whirlwind, he is believed to possess some of its power, or to be trying to get it.

[1] Alice C. Fletcher, *Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1897, p. 326. It is true, as Lovejoy points out, and in this Dr. William Jones agrees, that Miss Fletcher interprets *wakonda* in terms of will, whereas will (volition) was probably only a special case of *wakonda*.

[2] McGee, *op. cit.*

Thus the moth, because of its fluttering wings, and especially because of the way in which it emerges from its cocoon, is possessed of the power of the whirlwind. The buffalo bull is supposed to be seeking to obtain the whirlwind's power, when, before going into a fight he paws the earth and deftly throws a little dust up into the air, producing the semblance of a whirlwind.[1] In these imitative acts we have a most valuable suggestion as to the method of the development of magical rites from this general belief in a mysterious power.[2]

The Iroquois had a belief very similar to that of the other Indian stocks referred to above, the term used by them being *orenda*, or a closely allied word. Howitt, who has discussed it most at length, defines it as "a hypothetical potence or potentiality to do or effect results mystically." An Iroquois shaman was one who had much *orenda*. A fine hunter likewise had a superior quality of *orenda*, while an unsuccessful hunter was one whose *orenda* was not a match for the *orenda* of the game. If one clan wins out in a contest with another, it is because again of superior contact with *orenda*.[3]

It is impossible to say from a study of the literature dealing with them that all of the North American Indian stocks possess the idea, since it has so often been misinterpreted by their observers under the category of personal divinities. Among the Iroquois the idea is in no wise a synonym for a psychic element of any sort, for, as Howitt points out, their names for life, soul, ghost, mind, and brain, as well as that for muscular strength, are in no way related to the word *orenda*. In the light of the evidence we possess, it seems altogether likely that the belief in a mysterious power of the sort

[1] "The whirlwind and the elk in the mythology of the Dakota," Wissler, *Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. XVIII, p. 257.

[2] *Vide* Chap. VII, *Magic, infra*.

[3] J. N. B. Howitt, "Orenda, and a suggestion toward the origin of religion," *The American Anthropologist*, Vol. IV (N. S.), p. 38.

described above was very widely prevalent among the Indian peoples. The Shoshonean tribes possessed it (Howitt), and it was or is a well-developed notion among the Kwakiutl (Boas). The Pueblo also possibly have it in some form. One writer says that they worship the sun and moon, not as objects in themselves, but as the manifestation of a mysterious power. The following description of the Northern Maidu of California strongly suggests the same belief. They think "that the whole country occupied by them is thronged with mysterious powers, or spirits, known as *kukini*. . . . These beings are regarded as residing at definite spots, to which in particular the shamans go to gain power." They may become the guardian spirits of these functionaries.[1] The likeness of this belief to the Algonkin theory of *manitou*, which one may obtain for himself as a sort of protective agency, is very significant. In fact, *manitou* has often been called a guardian spirit, which it certainly is not, if guardian spirit is taken in the ordinary sense; for when the Algonkin youth goes into seclusion to secure the *manitou*, and dreams of or has a waking hullucination of some animal which he henceforth regards as a protector, his idea is simply that this animal stands ready to assist him with its own *manitou* when he needs it. If the belief of the Maidu is a genuine spiritistic notion, it is at least valuable in this connection as showing a bond of union between the idea of the mysterious force and that of the animistic view of the world.

There are also remnants of this belief among the Pawnee, although it is very difficult to determine its importance to them. Their fascinating star-cult[2] may be only a variation of the *manitou* philosophy, notwithstanding those investigators to

[1] Roland Dixon, "The Northern Maidu," *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. XVII, p. 265.

[2] See G. A. Dorsey's studies of the Pawnee.

whom we owe our knowledge of the cult regard it as based upon a well-developed pantheon of genuine deities. If this is the case, it is possible that the Pawnee religion is an illustration of how the impersonal conception may, under appropriate social and economic conditions, develop into the more advanced religious type. It is a significant fact, however, that Mr. James R. Murie, the Pawnee informant of these investigators, assures Mr. William Jones that the fundamental idea of this cult is precisely that of the Algonkin *manitou*.

The Thompson Indians also have the *manitou* 'concept,' but it is difficult to determine whether the following descriptions by Teit refer to it or not; in any case they strongly suggest it. They believe in the existence of a great many mysterious beings. The 'land mysteries' are the spirits of the mountain peaks. In the lakes and at cascades live 'water mysteries.' Some of these assume bodily form and appear to men. "A lake in the mountains near the Coast tribes has never been known to freeze over, no matter how cold the weather." This is, of course, interpreted, as in the case with anything strange or unusual, as evidence of the influence of some mystery, which, so far as the accounts go, seems to the present writer quite the same as the mystic potency, *wakonda*. With their minds full of the idea of a mystic power in everything, it is not strange that they are subject to many confirmatory hallucinations. On the surface of the lake above mentioned, apparitions at certain times appear. "A lake at the head of Salmon River becomes (as they think) very tempestuous as soon as people touch its waters." Their prayers and observances of various kinds "were founded on their belief in mysterious powers pervading all nature. The stars, the dawn, mountains, trees, animals, were all believed to be possessed of mysterious powers." [1] As far as mere words go,

[1] James Teit, *op. cit.*, pp. 338, 344 *et al.*

this description would apply perfectly to the Iroquois or to the Algonkin. The Thompson Indians in all their old prayers addressed simply 'Thou' or 'Chief,' referring to a power or essence possibly much more vague than these names in English seem to connote. "Roots, and other vegetables, growing near a haunted or mysterious lake, should not be dug or gathered. Vegetation near such a lake is called its blanket, and the lake, if robbed of its blanket, will take revenge by visiting sickness, bad luck, or death upon the root-gatherer." This, again, would seem to be due to some mystic power present in these places.

A very clear and striking instance of the belief in this impersonal 'force' is to be found among the Melanesian Islanders. They believe in a power, or influence, not physical, and in a way supernatural. It shows itself, however, in various physical forces and in any kind of power or excellence which a man may possess. This potency is called by various names in the different groups of islands, but the notion is everywhere fundamentally the same. One of the most convenient of its names is *mana*, and by this we shall here refer to it. This *mana* is not fixed in anything, and can be conveyed in almost anything; spirits, also, whether ghosts or supernatural beings, have *mana* and can impart it to persons or objects. Although personal beings are its source, *mana* can act through various media, such as water, stones, bones, and the like. "All Melanesian religion consists in getting this *mana* for one's self, or getting it used for one's benefit, all religion, that is, as far as religious practices go." [1] It is supposed to reside in everything out of the ordinary in human life or in nature. It may be attached to persons, ghosts, spirits, or things. "When one has got it, he can use it and direct it, but its force may break forth at some new point," its presence

[1] Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 119.

being determined by what are, to the natives, definite objective proofs. Thus, if one of these islanders finds a queer-shaped stone, similar, for instance, to the fruit of some tree, he will put it at the foot of such a tree to see if it will increase its yield, and if he imagines that this has been increased, he is convinced that his stone contains *mana*. If a friend wishes to secure some of this same advantage for his own trees, he may bring a stone, and on payment of a suitable sum, lay it by the side of the stone which contains the *mana*, and thus secure some for himself. Ordinarily, however, it seems that *mana* is secured through the aid of spirits and ghosts. Prayers and sacrifices are addressed to them, but only to induce them to assist the worshipper with some of their *mana*. These sacrifices are, in many cases, little more than charms for securing the 'power.'

In some of the islands the ghosts are the most important avenues of securing *mana;* in others it is the spirits. Only those ghosts are given this quasi-worship who, when in the body, gave evidence of having unusual control over the power. It is thus somewhat more definitely connected with persons than it is in the belief of the North American Indians, and this connection with persons is a possible explanation of how it came to be so closely identified with ghosts and spirits. The following words of Codrington suggest some further details as to the connotation of the concept. It is an "invisible power which is believed by the natives to cause all such effects as transcend their conception of the regular course of nature, and to reside in spiritual beings, whether in the spiritual part of living men or in the ghosts of the dead, being imparted by them to their names and to various things that belong to them, such as stones, snakes, and indeed objects of all sorts." By means of the power, men may bring about both good and ill, may bless and curse. It is thus evident

that it is an entirely impersonal and quasi-mechanical something with which spirits are in peculiar *rapport*, but which is also in a measure controlled by men who have distinguished themselves by great bravery and by daring feats,[1] and hence by easy transfer is also possessed by the ghosts of these men as long as their memory is comparatively fresh.[2]

On account of the great economic and social differences of the Algonkin and the Melanesian, it is useless to try to determine which of them have the concept in the most highly developed form. It seems clear that the Melanesian idea belongs to the same genus if not to the same species as does that of the Indian. We shall attempt to show presently that this whole general notion of an impersonal force may very legitimately be regarded as the direct result of man's first and most unreflective reactions to his world. If such was the case, it seems most in accord with what we know of social change to regard the various forms of the concept found among different peoples as divergent growths having no serial relationships, but rather cognates, their divergences being due to the different social and physical contexts in which they have existed. Thus the Indian notion, at least that of the Algonkin stock, is rather highly generalized and is the relatively abstract outcome of a certain amount of naïve reflection. The Indian does not appear to have had the same interest in spirits and ghosts that the Melanesian has had, and hence his concept has not been associated with spiritual agencies, while, with the Melanesian, the idea has been very definitely associated with ghosts and spirits. The reasons for this difference of interest are probably connected in some subtle way with the social development of each people, and

[1] *The Melanesians*, p. 191.

[2] A 'concept' similar to that contained in *mana* is also found among the *Maori*, where the same term is applied to it. Cf. J. C. Andersen, *Maori Life in Ao-tea*, Wellington, N.Z., 1907.

of this we know practically nothing. It would be entirely gratuitous to say that the Melanesian belief is a development from a preëxisting ghost or spirit worship. There is no evidence that they now worship ghosts. They simply honor them or inveigle them to secure their *mana*, and ghosts which have never given evidence of possessing any of it are promptly forgotten.

There is somewhat definite evidence that the concept of the mysterious impersonal force is held by many other races. Lovejoy [1] gives a good *resumé* of some of this evidence. He finds an idea of the sort reported as held by various Polynesian and allied races; he refers to the clear testimony of Hetherwick that certain of the Bantu peoples possess it, and to the probability that it is also to be found among the Masai. The Bantu word is *mulungu*, which is connected with words meaning great or old. "In its native use and form the word does not imply personality, for it does not belong to the personal class of nouns. Its form rather denotes a property inhering in something, as life or health inheres in the body. . . . The untaught Yao refuses to assign to it any idea of being or personality." [2] Another observer reports the Bantu as having a vague notion of a power transcending ordinary spirits. Baring-Gould says of the nomads of northern Asia that God is to them awful and undefined. They feel his presence about them and above them, and, with dazzled and bewildered mind, seek to know nothing more. In the light of what we have noted regarding primitive belief elsewhere, it is tempting to think that here also we have the concept of the 'wonderful,' the 'mysterious,' and that the idea

[1] "Primitive philosophy," *The Monist*, Vol. XVI, pp. 372 ff.

[2] Hetherwick, A., *Journal of Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. XXXII, p. 93. Quoted by Lovejoy, *op. cit.* For the Masai, see Thomson, *Through Masailand*, and Hollis, *The Masai.*

of personality has been read into it by an observer with preconceptions.

In the case of several peoples which have been carefully studied, but not from the point of view of the belief here discussed, there are many suggestions thrown out which seem most intelligible if taken in connection with this belief. There are frequent references in such studies to 'magic power' or the like, and from all descriptions it is entirely cognate with *mana* or *wakonda*. The term 'magic power,' however, is unfortunate because it predisposes one to lump all effects so described under the heading of magic. Magic, properly speaking, refers to a set of practices of a certain sort, which may or may not be founded upon a belief in some mysterious potency such as we have described above. The reasons for regarding magic as quite distinct from this can be fully given only when we turn to the discussion of magic itself. We simply raise the question here as to whether, when we are told that certain people believe that magic powers reside in particular places, objects, or people, if it is not quite possible that in many cases it is really a force analogous to the Melanesian *mana* that is meant. It seems that a people might, in the simplest stages of such a belief, be governed simply by the tacit assumption of such an existence and yet have no name for it.

Whether the Australians have such a name or not cannot be definitely determined from reading the accounts of those who have directly studied them. On the basis of such work as that of Spencer and Gillen and of Howitt, Dr. Frazer has attempted to read magic into practically all their belief and practice. It seems to the present writer that a differentiation is here possible which will generally add much to our understanding of the true inwardness of primitive custom.

The following account from Spencer and Gillen suggests an attitude of mind so similar to that of the Melanesian that

it is difficult to regard it as other than fundamentally the same. It certainly could not be classed as magic without changing the connotation of that term very radically. The Central Australians point to a heap of stones which they believe some one once vomited up. These are thought to be full of 'evil magic,' and must be kept covered with sticks. If they should ever become exposed, and a person passing by should see them, he would be made sick and be caused to vomit. Hence all who pass are careful to throw a stick upon the heap, and thus help to prevent the 'evil magic' from issuing forth.[1] The 'evil magic' here referred to can be nothing other than that impersonal mechanical contagion, or force, which is the subject of this chapter. Another illustration of the same thing is the use made by some of these Central Tribes of the *churinga*, or emblem, of the rat totem. This emblem is rubbed upon the faces of the young men to increase the growth of their whiskers. There is the fundamental thought here that the rat's long whiskers are due to some especial power residing in the rat, or, to use the Algonkin term, to its *manitou*, and that this may be transmitted to other beings through any object associated with the rat. In fact, the Australian apparently believes, as do most savages, that every power or quality is an endowment from without, rather than something belonging to the very organism itself, that is, something made possible by the way the animal or person is built up. The savage does not have the concept of the interrelation of structure and function. Each living being first exists, and then whatever it does that attracts attention is supposedly due to some especial power which is more or less extrinsic or detachable.

It seems worth while to illustrate further and in some detail the way in which this idea underlies the general ceremonial life of the Australians. As we have said, they apparently

[1] Spencer and Gillen, *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 472.

have no specific name for it, and hence probably do not conceive it intellectually. If we have even approximated a correct interpretation of them, the 'concept,' as they have it, is one of habit rather than of the intellect; that is to say, various automatic or reflex acts have gradually been elaborated into a somewhat definite biological attitude toward the world, an attitude which they have never had occasion to raise above the biological level, or to abstract from the overt, objective world. Spencer and Gillen quote from Curr's *The Australian Race* the statement that the power which enforces custom on the tribes is mostly impersonal. These authors believe that the fear of the old men is the most obvious factor, not, however, denying that there is some notion of an impersonal sanction. While the attitude of the younger members of the tribe toward the old men is doubtless most reverential, it is also true that old and young alike believe that great catastrophes would surely befall them on the occasion of any infraction of custom. Some of the tribes have stories of great cosmic cataclysms being precipitated because of a man's indiscretion in revealing the sacred secrets of a ceremony to the women. The old men in all likelihood believe in a mysterious agency by which the infraction of custom is avenged. This agency, if it is thought of at all, is certainly not conceived in terms of any spirit personalities. In any case, it is certainly true that the Australian is hedged about in most complicated ways by powers of some sort, and that these powers, whatever their nature, are not associated with ghosts or spirits in any appreciable degree, nor do they even have, except in certain peculiar connections, any well-developed ideas of spirits at all.

The most interesting phase of Australian ceremonial life (*i.e.* among the Central Tribes) are the *Intichiuma* rituals which Dr. Frazer explains under the category of magic.[1] We

[1] *Fortnightly Review*, 1905, pp. 162 and 452.

believe they belong to a stage antecedent to both magic and religion, and that they furnish most interesting evidence of an implicit belief in an impersonal potency of some sort. These ceremonies are sacred rites associated with the totems, "the object of which is to secure the increase of the animal or plant which gives its name to the totem." [1] All the Arunta natives believe that the members of each totem have originated from the animal or plant whose name they bear, and this supposed fact is, to them, a satisfactory reason for the totemic name.[2] This theory of their relationship to the totem must not be allowed to divert our attention from the main point. Once granted that an individual or a group of persons becomes by chance associated with some plant, animal, inanimate object, or natural phenomenon, either through contiguity, or fancied resemblance, it requires no stretch of the imagination to see that the primitive man would conceive of them as connected in some hidden or mysterious way, and that this connection should quite naturally come to be thought of in terms of relationship. The theory of descent from the totem is quite possibly, then, merely due to the superficial limitations in the primitive man's mode of thought rather than to any fundamental conception of the nature or meaning of the world. The idea of primary importance here is that there is a power possessed by different groups of people in connection with certain animals or plants, and that through the medium of this common power the people can exercise a control over the natural objects. This seems to the present writer to be a fair statement, on the surface, of the situation among the Central Australian tribes described by Spencer and Gillen. Passing beyond the direct warrant of their narrative, the hypothesis is here offered that

[1] Spencer and Gillen, *The Native Tribes*, p. 166.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 210.

the Australian theory of control over the totem plant or animal through *Intichiuma* ceremonies is but an aspect of a vague, perhaps only half-conscious (because unformulated) theory that a potency of some sort is present in nature analogous to *wakonda*, *manitou*, or *mana*. At any rate each totem group believes itself to be in peculiar *rapport* with the force present in the totemic ancestor and continuing in its particular class of plant or animal at the present day. Dr. Frazer's original definition of a totem is apparently in entire accord with the view here presented, *i.e.* "A totem is a class of material objects which a savage regards with superstitious respect, believing that there exists between him and every member of the class an intimate and altogether special relation." [1] This special relation, in the case of the Australian, would seem to be that the individuals and their totems possess in a measure the same potency, that they are together *manitou*, the Algonkin would probably say. Hence the members of a totem, by an exercise of the potency possessed by them through appropriate ceremonies, can induce a similar activity of the same power residing in the animal or plant. They seem to think of the existence of the plant or animal as due in some way to this agency but not possessing it as a spirit. Hence, if a man has control over the same potency or owns some of it himself, he may very logically assume that he can, through it, produce an increase in the totem object, whose existence he assumes to be already dependent upon the power in question. Such, at any rate, seems to be a possible theory of the Australian ceremonies for increasing the supply of the totem objects if it be granted that the natives have some working concept of an impersonal potency in nature which may be tapped by especially qualified individuals or societies.

This view of the matter helps us to see how the native may

[1] *Totemism*, p. 1.

properly eat, to a certain extent, of his totem, for this totem is not an animal related to him in the same sense in which certain individuals in the tribe are related to him. He and his totem simply possess or are in *rapport* with a common power. Hence there could be no fear of eating it, as there might be were it regarded as a deity or even as genuinely akin to himself. In fact, Spencer and Gillen tell us that the relation is not, as some previous observers have assumed, 'one of mutual respect and protection.' On the hypothesis here presented, this is precisely what we should expect. The relation of the native to his totem is altogether a practical one. He does not worship it nor seek to protect it from his fellows. He simply believes he possesses, in common with it, a particular power which he can turn to useful account, that is, that he can so manipulate it as to cause the numbers of the totem to increase.[1] An examination of the details of the *Intichiuma* ceremonies still further confirms our theory. Thus the men of the witchetty-grub totem, in the course of their ceremony, visited spots where there were rocks supposed to represent the adult animal and its eggs. These were sung over and struck with twigs, the leader also touching the men with one of the stones. They likewise visited a spot where their ancestor is supposed to have been in the habit of preparing and eating these same grubs. Here, again, they struck the rocks and sang to the animal to lay many eggs. Here also there is supposed to be buried a large stone representing the adult animal. Thus, the natives of this totem go through various movements which they suppose their ancestors made. They visit a number of holes, each of which contains a stone representing the chrysalis stage of the grub. These are sung over, handled, and cleaned.

[1] The theory does not, of course, explain just why he may eat only sparingly of it, but this might be due to a variety of incidental causes without the hypothesis being rendered in the least doubtful.

In the course of these proceedings they make various movements which are doubtless imitative of some stage in life of the grub, accompanying the same with songs to the same effect. All these things, and many others that might equally well have been mentioned, suggest that the natives are trying by suggestive acts and by singing to arouse or exercise the potency in themselves so that it will exert itself in the multiplication of the grubs.

From every point of view we find the Australians possessed of practices and beliefs which seem to presuppose this conception of the world as in some way alive or charged with mysterious force. There is a suggestion of it in the various beliefs connected with the local totem centres. These are places where the careless must beware. Woman especially must be careful, since one of the spirit individuals which swarm in these places may enter her, seeking reincarnation. The *churinga*, or bull-roarers, associated with the totems and with each individual, are certainly regarded as endowed with some mystic power (magic, Frazer would say). This power is believed to attach also to the holes in which these bull-roarers are kept hidden. The young man must undergo many ceremonials and endure long probation before being allowed to look upon these sacred spots.[1] These preliminary observances for the novice are suggestive to the reader as expedients to purify or fortify the body of the novice that he may withstand or endure the mysterious influences with which he then for the first time comes in contact. The manner of dealing with these sacred objects, handling them, loaning them to other groups or tribes, all convey the impression that the native believes that they are endowed with a potency of some sort. In borrowing the *churinga* of a neighboring group, the natives think they will be benefited in some

[1] Spencer and Gillen, Vol. I, p. 139.

way. "A group is anxious to have in its possession for a time a large number (of *churinga*), with the general idea that it will in some vague and undefined way bring them good fortune." [1] But enough for the Australians. Possibly an undue amount of space has been devoted to them. The unanalyzed term 'magical' has, however, been applied so indiscriminately to everything connected with this race, that it has seemed worth while to examine their beliefs and customs from the point of view of this other 'concept,' so widely current among the natural races.

It is possible that this 'concept' of the mystic potency was really one of the dominant elements in the native religion of the Romans. As was stated in the preceding chapter, scholars generally have recognized that their primitive religion was quite lacking in the definite personal coloring which renders the religion of Greece so attractive. It is only, however, when the religious ideas of the Romans are examined in the light of the ethnic religions at present extant that we gain a suggestion of the true significance of this deficiency in personality. To be sure, the Roman deities did develop more or less personality, but there is much in the accounts we have of the festivals and ceremonials to suggest that the original attitude toward them was very much like that of some present-day races toward the 'mystic potence.' The various objects of attention in primitive Roman life were thought of as being the seat of imperfectly defined powers of some sort. Thus the hearth fire, the doorway, cross-roads, had their *numina*, in each case a vague, semi-personal 'presence' of some sort. The performance of vocations, such as that of agriculture, was thought to be possible only through the assistance of unseen, mysterious powers, and at different seasons of the

[1] Spencer and Gillen, Vol. I, p. 159.

year such powers were especially manifest and had to be dealt with through appropriate ceremonials.[1]

Not merely in the case of the Roman but also in that of many other religions of antiquity do we find much that is suggestive of this same 'concept.' Thus, sacred objects and sacred places in primitive Semitic religion are not always associated with deities and personal spirits. In fact, the 'holy place' may have its sanctity prior to and quite independently of any association of a deity with the place.[2] It seems also probable that the elaborate system of Chaldean magic [3] was based upon this same belief in a mechanical potency. In the case of the Greeks, the concept of personality was so strong that we find little if any trace of the 'mystic potency' in their historic religion. If, however, we could get back of the Olympian pantheon, we might find a substrate of belief similar in character to that which has here concerned us. Thus Farnell says, "The aboriginal Greek may have

[1] Fowler, *Roman Festivals*, p. 335. We may be permitted to repeat in this connection a quotation from Fowler, given in the preceding chapter, for its significance is greatly enhanced when read in the light of what has gone before in this chapter. "In the oldest festivals the deities are either altogether doubtful, or so wanting in clearness and prominence as to be altogether subordinate in interest to the details of the ceremony. Here is good evidence of the indistinctness of the divine; the cult appealed to the people as the practical method of obtaining their desires, but the unseen powers with whom they dealt in this cult were beyond their ken, often unnamed, and only visible in the sense of being seated in, or in some sort symbolized by, tree or stone or animal" (p. 337, *op. cit.*). For this suggestion regarding the analogue of the Roman religion and that of modern savage concepts of the 'impersonal force,' the present writer is especially indebted to an article by E. A. R. Haigh, *Contemporary Review*, Vol. XCIII, No. 505, pp. 32 ff.

[2] W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, 2d ed., Chap. IV, especially p. 155. Possibly we here read into Smith something he does not mean, but his data strongly suggest the view here taken. See also Lyall, *Asiatic Studies*, 1st series, p. 16.

[3] For an account of which, see Jastrow's *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, Boston, 1898.

regarded the mountain, the sky, or the stone as sentient, possessed with *power* [italics ours] to help him or hurt him, and may have tried to appease it with certain rites, without believing in a definite and clearly conceived person who lived in the sky or in the mountain." [1]

In the preceding pages the attempt has been made to illustrate how widespread among ethnic races is the notion of a 'power,' or potency, as the basis of all natural phenomena; that it is so vaguely conceived, in most cases, as to be scarcely describable as a personal agency of any sort; that it is rather thought of as impersonal and even quasi-mechanical. We do not question but that this unformulated hypothesis of the savage lies at the basis of his so-called magical practices. The point is rather that, for a clear understanding of the primitive attitude, which is, in current discussions, classified in part under the category of magic and in part under that of religion, there is need to grasp this idea by itself as the savage's basic point of view. It contributes in a certain way to the development of both religion and magic, but it is not the entire substance of either one of them. Religion is primarily the expression of a valuational consciousness, in the building up of which, as we have said, custom and habit play important parts. In the working out of values and in the adjustments made in recognition of them, — or for their conservation, as Höffding might say, — the notion of a superior potency in nature would be interwoven as part and parcel of the primitive mode of thought. The same valuational consciousness might utilize the idea of this potency either as vaguely impersonal or as the effect of conscious will. The fact that most of the highly developed religions postulate superior personal agencies of some sort does not mean that they have abandoned as inadequate the vaguer impersonal view, but rather that the older view has

[1] *Cults of the Greek States*, Vol. I, p. 4.

been modified or has been given different expression by some modification, internal or external, of the social groups concerned. Magic, on the other hand, is not something cruder, more primitive, than religion, involving a different working hypothesis, but is rather a set of practices or expedients expressing a different psychical attitude, a different point of view, in the development of which the same concept of primitive philosophy and the higher theory of personal, spiritual agencies seem to have been equally available and useful. At any rate the theory of an impersonal power is no more exclusively used by magic than is that of personal agencies by religion. In every case it is the subjective point of view thus finding expression that determines the practice as magical or as religious. To be sure, this difference in point of view can never be fully determined, and doubtless one is often fused with the other, but this should not lead us to fall back upon objective differentia which make no pretence of taking into account the subjective point of view.

We may now turn our attention to the problem of the conditions which could conceivably have given rise to such 'concepts' as those of *manitou*, *orenda*, or *mana*. It seems natural to us, at first thought, that primitive people should have originally viewed the world in terms of personal agency. The other 'concept' appears too abstract; it seems to presuppose too much antecedent reflection to admit of its being regarded as a truly primitive mode of thought. We should remember, however, that personal agencies can scarcely have been postulated of nature by people hardly conscious of any definite personality in themselves. The first attitude of the little child toward the strange and startling is a sort of biological 'take care,' or 'watch out.' We venture the assertion that if he attributes a personal power to the inanimate object, it is at the more or less unconscious suggestion of the sophisticated adult.

It seems to the present writer that the savage at first would be likewise more apt to assume the 'watch-out' attitude toward things about him than to suppose them possessed of spirits. He was surrounded by objects which affected him more or less for good or ill. What they might contain or might be, ultimately, he probably did not stop to say to himself had he been able to do so. They simply demanded of him caution. If he were wise or circumspect, he might use them to advantage; if not, he might expect to be injured. As far as he could at first generalize, he would simply say, 'there are things, places, animals, that I must watch out for.' As far as his own attitude was concerned, he would scarcely need to state the matter more definitely, but in communicating his attitude to others he might find it easiest to say, 'That animal is *manitou*,' or, 'This stone is or has *mana;*' that is, there is something unusual about them; they have a potency that some other things do not seem to have. The following statement by Major Leonard, allowing something for its rhetorical tone, probably states very fairly the conditions productive of the attitude here described. Writing of the Niger valley native, he says: "To him Nature was the work of something invisible, or something human, yet not human, that he could not see, but that he could feel as he felt the wind soughing through the tangled foliage, an invisible presence, as it were, a breath or a vapor, similar to that which he felt filled him. . . . It is not the beauty, it is not so much the greatness and grandness, and not even the immensity of Nature, that appeals to or impresses the savage. Rather it is her proximity to him, a proximity fraught with evil, danger, and death, that fills him with awe. It is her kinship, her oneness, so to speak, with him that impresses him with reverence. . . . Therefore it was not only on the face of the waters, but on a grass or shrub-covered expanse as well as over the leafy and uneven surface of the forest, that he saw stealing,

if not as embodied form, at least in a materialized if shapeless shape, what to him was some vast and mysterious power."[1] Similarly Howitt, writing of the Iroquois, says that, since activity is usually accompanied by sounds of some sort, "it followed naturally that noises or sounds were interpreted to be the certain evidence of the putting forth of such mystic potence to effect some purpose. . . . The speech and utterance of birds and beasts, the soughing of the wind, the voices of the night, the moaning of the tempest, the wild creaking and cracking of wind-rocked and frost-riven trees, lakes, and rivers, and the multiple other sounds and noises in nature were conceived to be chanting the dirges and songs of the various bodies . . . in the use and exercise of their mystic potence."[2] Not merely did the wind and various natural phenomena connected with it impress the natural man with the idea of a pervading power; his attention was also attracted by certain animals, whose strength or fleetness so much surpassed his own, or who were apparently weak and insignificant, and yet by cunning or by their very insignificance escaped their enemies. The Eskimo of Cumberland Sound believe in the extraordinary powers of animals, those of the sea, in particular, being endowed with powers greater than those of ordinary human beings.[3] The animal beliefs of the North

[1] Leonard, *The Lower Niger and its Tribes*, pp. 91–93, London, 1906.

[2] J. N. B. Howitt in *The American Anthropologist*, N. S., Vol. IV, pp. 35, 36.

[3] Franz Boas, *Bulletin American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. XV, p. 120.

The following additional notes regarding the Eskimo attitude toward animals are interesting in the light of the preceding discussion of this chapter. Although the reference to the belief in a mystery, or potency, is not explicit, the account suggests something at least quite closely akin to it. One of the remarkable powers supposed to be possessed by sea-animals is that of detecting a man who has been in contact with a corpse. The dead body causes everything that touches it to appear dark in color to them as well as to the native medicine-men, or *angakut*, who likewise have extraordinary powers. Such animals can

American Indians are numerous and well known, and all of them seem to be spontaneous expressions of the Indian's feeling for the wonderful or mysterious in that department of nature. Thus the bear, the coyote, the raven, the buffalo are more or less widely regarded as possessing superior powers. We have already pointed out how the Plains Indians noticed that the buffalo pawed the ground in a peculiar way before charging an antagonist, thus sending into the air a small whirlwind of dust, and, as they thought, in this manner arousing the *wakonda*, to which he had access, and which was typified by the whirlwind, that he might have power over his enemies.

also see the effect of flowing human blood, from which a vapor arises, surrounding the bleeding person and communicating itself to everything that comes in contact with such a person. This vapor and the dark color of death are very distasteful to such animals, and they avoid a hunter thus affected. On these grounds the Eskimo explain their hunting taboos. In this series of beliefs the idea that death and blood set free a certain 'contagion' seems quite clear. From these illustrations it would not appear that these Eskimo have reached the height of some of the Indians in conceiving of a single abstract force, or *manitou*, but that they have possibly the more primitive idea that some animals have remarkable powers and that some things, such as dead bodies and blood, must be dealt with cautiously. When one has broken a taboo, he is expected to confess to his fellows, that they may take the precaution of avoiding him and not becoming infected. The extraordinary qualities of the *angakut* cause him to shine with a bright light (not visible to every one, of course) which gives him unusual powers of vision, makes him feel well (cf. the experience of the Algonkin on coming from the sweat lodge with his body cleansed by *manitou*), is felt as a pressure within, always guides him, and leaves his body at death. In the same ways these Eskimo believe that people with deranged minds have supernatural powers. Birth as well as death is associated with exhalations, or vapors, against which one must be on his guard. So also they fear menstruating women, and those who have suffered a miscarriage. (Cf. Boas, *op. cit.*)

In all those cases it is to be noted that the power is not associated with spirits, although the Eskimo have spirit beliefs. It seems to the present writer that the spirit beliefs of these peoples, as well as those of the Australians, the Melanesians, and possibly others, betray no intrinsic relation to the potency-idea. There is nothing to indicate that the spirit agencies are personified 'magic powers.'

The wind in this case seems to be the primary object of wonder to the Indian. The whirlwind suggests to him in some way "the subjective experience of a confused state of mind. When a man loses his presence of mind, he is said to have been overcome by the power of the whirlwind. As this misfortune often befell a man in battle, it became the prayer of the Indian that the minds of his enemies should be confused." Similarly "the Dakota believe that there is a close relation between the whirlwind and the fluttering wings of a moth. The cocoon is regarded as the bundle or mysterious object from which a power similar to that of the whirlwind emanates. I was told that the observed facts as to the emergence of the moth from this bundle were in themselves evidence of the sacred character of the moth because it could escape from an enclosure. Like the wind, it could not be confined. It represents, from that point of view, the kind of power desired by the Indian; viz. to be intangible, invisible, and destructive like the wind." In explanation, the Indians hold that "there is a deep mystery in the wind, since it is intangible and visible only in its effects. The moth, by its wings, reproduced the phenomenon of the whirlwind, or received from it power to rise in the air. Then all the other mysterious acts of the moth were explained by its *rapport* with this power." The symbol of the cocoon carved on various implements, or even the cocoon itself carried about, "is regarded as a perpetual prayer to the power of the whirlwind."[1] Many variations and further aspects of this belief might be noted. They help us to see the simple ways in which the Indian's wonderment is excited, and with it the belief in a pervading mysterious power. The attitude toward the moth and the buffalo suggests to what intricate degrees the fundamental belief in an undefined

[1] Clark Wissler, "The whirlwind and the elk in the mythology of the Dakota," *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. XVIII, pp. 258 ff.

power may develop, and the curious connections that it may acquire.

From observations in quite a different quarter of the world, Leonard illustrates the same primitive awe of animals by the negro's attitude toward the tortoise. It is an animal whose many characteristics appeal to the Niger Tribes. It has few enemies, does not try to get away, merely withdraws into its shell, seems to be able to exist for a long time without food. Add to this immunity its habitual silence, its sedentary habits, the extreme slowness of its movements, its natural instinct to keep out of sight, and we see why the savage regards it as a peculiarly mysterious and therefore intelligent creature, the possessor of spirit-power of some sort.[1]

When the idea of this potency is once acquired from some striking object or situation, it is easy to see that it would gradually assume the function of a general explanatory concept, or rather that the natural man would more and more carry with him into new situations and experiences this habitual frame of mind. Thus, among these same negroes, implements are treated with great care, and as fully entitled to respect, altogether apart from their domestic or outside uses. In this way the farmer has the greatest veneration for his farm implements, as has also the fisherman for his nets, the trader for his measures and goods, and fisherman and trader both for their paddles, and the hunter for his bows, arrows, and guns. . . . Each individual one of them possesses a soul of its own that, in the eyes of the negro, gives it a special and peculiar significance.[2] We venture the suggestion that these so-called spirits of the implements are at least analogous, if not identical, with the 'undefined potency' of some other peoples.

[1] Leonard, *op. cit.*, pp. 314–315.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 310, condensed. Sir Charles Lyall, *Asiatic Studies*, 1st series, p. 16, notes the same veneration of utensils in India.

These various articles are the means of their owners' livelihood, and hence, to them, must be the vehicles of some more or less hidden powers. It would be easy for a civilized man to imagine that this veneration is for definitely conceived spirits, when it may be merely a variation of the general attitude of wonderment which probably is often entirely unformulated, or, if formulated at all, under the questioning of the white man, tends to be stated in the terms which he, perhaps unintentionally, suggests.

Enough has perhaps been said regarding the primitive character, wide prevalence, and possible origin of the 'concept' of a quasi-mechanical, impersonal force in nature. With variations more or less important, it seems to prevail so widely in savage philosophy that some explicit account should be taken of it in all discussions of magic, primitive religion, customs, and morality generally. We do not believe it can be held to be in itself a religious concept. It is rather a point of view or theory of the world which may or may not be used by religion, a 'concept' which may play into the hands of magic as well as into those of religion. It is a part of the raw material which, along with much else, may enter into the developed religious consciousness. The part it is possible for it to play may be seen best in certain aspects of the development of the idea of divine personages. A deity, we may remark, is probably not originally an abstract power personified, but rather an actual person who has unusual control over this power. A deity, however, could not spring from this condition alone. There are other important factors to be taken into account. To the discussion of these and related problems we shall turn in the following chapter.

It would be easy, if time permitted, to find many survivals of the primitive point of view in the folk-beliefs and even religion of modern culture races. The belief in luck, so widely

prevalent among Teutonic peoples,[1] is possibly akin to it. According to this belief, there is something undeterminable about nature. One may try ever so hard and exercise all the dictates of common sense, and yet things will go against him, while another may not *try* in the least, and yet he may *chance* to attain the very best of fortune. The widely prevalent belief in charms and amulets, especially among the more ignorant of modern Catholics, contains essentially the same idea. Likewise the present-day 'revivalist' who 'agonizes' in prayer for the 'power' to come down that he may have much success in 'winning souls' makes use of the same primitive philosophy, even though he frequently personifies the potency in terms of the Holy Spirit. That is to say, in spite of the apparent personification, the mental attitude involved is the same as that of the Indian who seeks *rapport* with *wakonda*. A little reflection upon modern life would show that all of us easily drop back into this naïve, primitive mode of thought, according to which we are prone to feel that things may come to pass notwithstanding natural law or our own personal capacities.

[1] Cf. Sumner, *Folkways*, pp. 6, *et seq.*

CHAPTER VII

MAGIC AND RELIGION

THE essential nature of the religious attitude will be made clearer by contrasting and relating it to the point of view expressed in magic. We do not believe that magic can, in all cases, be sharply differentiated from religion. The varieties of each are innumerable because the conditions under which they appear vary indefinitely; but if we take extreme cases, there seems to be quite a difference of mental attitude involved in the one and in the other.

In order to get at this difference, we may conveniently start with an examination of Frazer's conception, that magic represents a more primitive method of thought than does religion.[1] His contention is that magic preceded religion, and was gradually given up in favor of the latter as its value was little by little discredited. Lang expresses rather baldly the theory put forth by Frazer thus: "Have not men attempted to secure weather, and everything else to their desire by magic, before they invented gods and prayed to them for what magic, as they learned by experience, failed to provide?" [2]

If we may be permitted to construct a picture of primitive man on the basis of Frazer's suggestions, we would find something like the following: He must have been a man with developed intellectual interests, in fact, with as good an equipment of intellectual attitudes as are possessed by an Englishman of fair education at the present day, but along with all this

[1] See, for instance, *The Golden Bough*, in which his views are presented in greatest detail.

[2] Andrew Lang, *Magic and Religion*, p. 47.

a total ignorance of the world in which it was his fate to work out his salvation. His condition was apparently such as would be that of a fairly intelligent man introduced from nowhere into our universe, having all our keen intellectual interests and active impulses, but entirely at sea as to where and how to begin to act. Hence he would of necessity make many mistakes and would only gradually learn fruitful methods and come to discard useless ones. As primitive man looked abroad upon the world, he conceived it as composed, for one thing, of various material objects and of a variety of forces and activities. He also peopled his world at a very early period, if not at the very first, with some sort of spiritual beings (apparently not spiritual agencies). From Frazer's discussion, it seems that he regards this hypothesis of spirits as coincident with man's first dealings with his mysterious world. Just why he should then have imagined there were spirits is not clear, for he had no use for them at first. However, as he continued to live in such a world, this hypothetical man soon discovered that it was to his interest to manipulate its objects and forces in various ways. But he did not turn at first to the spirits for assistance. From the earliest times he sought general rules whereby to turn the order of natural phenomena to his advantage. Under the stimulus of this impulse he formulated many rules of procedure, some of which were golden and some of which were dross, that is, some genuine laws were discovered and the beginnings of science were laid.[1] But man's first mental attitude was one of arrogant self-confidence. He imagined he could do anything he chose with the natural forces which surrounded him. He thought he had discovered the key to nature in the generalizations, 'like produces like,' and 'that which has been once in contact with another thing continues, after being physically separated

[1] *The Golden Bough*, 2d ed., Vol. I, p. 62.

from it, to be connected with it in some very real way.' In putting the matter thus, we are certainly not overstepping the thought Frazer seems to be trying to express, for he says that man was on the alert from the first for general rules whereby to turn natural phenomena to his advantage, and that this presupposition of magic must then have been his first formula.

However, Frazer says, primitive man discovered in time that he had been mistaken in his first generalization. "Step by step he must have been driven back from his proud position; foot by foot he must have yielded, with a sigh, the ground which he had once viewed as his own." [1] The recognition of his own helplessness is supposed to have carried with it a corresponding belief in the importance of those supernatural beings with which his imagination peoples the universe. It enhances his conception of their power. He had, apparently long before, thought of the world as inhabited by these superior beings as well as by himself, but they were not important to him as agencies, at least he considered himself their equal. But as his magic fails him, as he finds that he is not the cause of the phenomena of nature, of the storms, of the sunshine, of the fulness of the harvest, he begins to attribute the power, which he once supposed he possessed, to these supernatural beings. His theory of the world is still that it is dominated by conscious agency, although no longer his own. If he is frail, how vast and powerful are the beings who do control the gigantic machinery of nature. "Thus, as his old sense of equality with the gods slowly vanishes, he resigns at the same time the hope of directing the course of nature by his own unaided resources, that is, by magic, and looks more to the gods as the sole repositories of those supernatural powers which he once claimed to share with them. With the advance of knowledge, prayer and sacrifice assume the leading place

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

in religious ritual; and magic, which once ranked with them as a legitimate equal (should we not expect Frazer to have said their *superior?*), is gradually relegated to the background, and sinks to the level of a black art (why not entirely given up? we may ask); it is regarded as an encroachment, at once vain and impious (why impious?) upon the domain of the gods, and as such encounters the steady opposition of the priests (*i.e.* the representatives of the more advanced and intelligent conception of how to get along in the world), whose reputation and influence rise or fall with those of their gods." In other words, sacrifice and prayer become the resource of the enlightened portion of the community, while magic is the refuge of the superstitious and ignorant.[1] "By religion, then," Frazer says, "I understand a propitiation and conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and human life."[2] Religion is essentially an invention coördinate with the gradual growth in man of the conviction that magic was inefficacious. "This old happy confidence in himself and his powers was rudely shaken. He must have been sadly perplexed and agitated till he came to rest, as in a quiet haven after a tempestuous voyage, in a new system of faith and practice. . . . It was they (*i.e.* the superior spirits), as he now believed, and not he himself, who made the strong wind to blow."[3]

Such is Frazer's theory of the origin of religion out of magic. We have described it in some detail because it serves by contrast to render clearer the view of the matter here presented. His hypothesis is logical and clear when taken as a thing in itself, but when taken in connection with objective conditions

[1] Frazer, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 124, 130.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 63.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 77, condensed.

it violates, we believe, almost every principle of the psychology of primitive peoples. It bears every evidence of having been worked out *a priori*, and, when once possessed of it, its inventor has persistently seen every detail of anthropological science which has the slightest connection with religion or magic in its light. The most general criticism to be brought against such a theory is that it is too simple by far to be plausible.

That primitive man imagined he could, through magical technique, control the processes of nature is unquestionable, but that this belief came to him as a sort of intellectual generalization can scarcely be maintained. However little we may know of primitive man, we do know that he could not have had the same developed intellectual attitudes that the modern man possesses.[1] He was not a man of fully developed mental capacity experimenting cautiously and painfully with a mysterious universe. His first so-called generalization was the direct outcome of the almost physiological processes of habit and of association. Whatever physical object or act chanced to attract attention in any time of emotional stress, or when some other object or act was near the focus of attention, that object would thereafter be thought of in connection with the latter situation. Whenever ideas are thus associated, it is easy to come to the belief that their objective counterparts are connected. The postulates of magic as well as of religion are in large measure due to the inertia of habit. Man in all ages has been at the mercy of his associations of ideas, and, in fact, has been able to free himself from their domination only through the development of reflection and the critical faculty. Magic and religion are each, according to Frazer, diverse schemes devised by the primitive man for

[1] There may seem to be a discrepancy between this statement and certain passages in Chapter II, *supra*. It is only a superficial one, however.

the manipulation of his world to his advantage. We maintain that they were both quite independent of any conscious purpose in their origin, and that, far from one's being succeeded by the other, they are coincident, and develop from different phases or types of man's reactions to his world. The present status of magic and religion among primitive races is a refutation of Frazer. They exist side by side, nor is one in the hands of the ignorant and the other the possession of the more intelligent. Even the consistently religious man among the natural races believes and fears magic, even though he does not practise it. In other words, even though he supplicates the gods, he is firmly convinced that the methods of magic are very real and very efficacious; he has evidently *not* taken up with the gods *because he believes magic is futile*, else why should he continue to fear it. The priest, as the representative of the religion of the group, opposes magic, not because it is a manifestation of impious assumption against the 'superior spirits,' but because he thoroughly believes in and dreads the power of the magician. A still deeper ground of the universal antipathy between religion and magic will be pointed out in a later section of this chapter.[1] Further evidence that religion does not necessarily take the place of magic because the latter comes to be discredited is afforded by the fact that many of the natural races, as the Todas, regard races inferior to themselves in culture as especially powerful in magic. If religious practices arose because magic was found to be futile, we should not find among those of primitive culture this practically universal belief in the power of magic, even though it be practised by comparatively few of their number. There is absolutely no evidence that the development of religion is coincident with any decline in man's belief in the reality of magical agencies.

[1] p. 195, *infra*.

Moreover, the test of consequences could never have been operative in any appreciable degree. Dr. Frazer surely does not think that prayers and sacrifices succeeded in the long run in turning natural phenomena more largely to man's advantage than did magical practices. If primitive man weighed magic and found it wanting in practical consequences, he must inevitably have done the same with religion, and have found it equally powerless to bring results when applied to the course of nature and to human life. Magic and religion are undoubtedly related, but they represent within the social organism contemporaneous growths of a somewhat different sort.[1]

We have pointed out the practical difficulty in Dr. Frazer's theory of the change from magic to religion. We wish now to consider specifically his theory of religion. Religion,

[1] Dr. Frazer's chief card in support of his theory has been the case of the Australians, who are, so he claims, still in the stage of magic, attempting to accomplish all sorts of things with natural forces by the use of magical rites. It is noteworthy that the two most thoroughgoing accounts which we possess of the Australians were made by men who had Frazer's presuppositions regarding magic, and they acknowledge a certain amount of coöperation with him in the interpretation of their data. While this fact need not invalidate their positions, it should at least be borne in mind that they did have certain presuppositions in all their interpretative work. What we here suggest is in no sense a reflection upon the very great value of their works taken in their entirety. It is needless to say that we do not here go to the other extreme, and maintain with Lang that the Australians have well-developed religious ideas. The point is simply that the data that comes to us comes through men possessed with Frazer's *a priori* theory. We believe that magic and religion are to a certain extent fused in Australia, and that, even though they appeal to no spirits in their ceremonies, these ceremonies do express valuational attitudes of a definitely religious character. In the constructive portion of this chapter we shall discuss the case of the Australians and that of certain other anomalous peoples. Frazer's contention that the Australians have a magical rather than a religious view of life is, of course, the direct outcome of his conception of religion already referred to. The Australians are reported, and, we doubt not, truly, to make no sacrifices or prayers to superior powers. See, however, L. Parker (*The Euahlayi Tribe*), who claims that prayers are addressed to the 'All-father' by at least *one* section of the Australian race.

according to him, is not different from magic except in its use of more enlightened methods to effect the same sort of ends, magic depending in part upon the theory that like produces like, and that objects once in contact continue to be in contact in some mysterious way, even though separated, and in part upon the belief that it may compel spirits to obey its behests, while religion spends its time in the more enlightened occupation of conciliating superior powers by prayer and sacrifice. We do not believe that an analysis of the concrete data of religion, whether primitive or advanced in form, will support this conception. As we have before suggested, were religion a practical expedient, it would have died out, as magic is doing, with the growing sense of its inutility. But religion does not owe its existence to such motives. It originates, it is true, to a certain extent in the practical life of a people, but only when the stress of the practical is less acutely felt, so that it is possible to survey the whole in an appreciative way. It is true that the feelings of appreciation thus gained may be carried over and used in very pressing and practical situations, but the essential character of the religious attitude is not derived from the immediate situation in which it is used. Prayer and sacrifice, although in a way practical expedients, are also just as truly expressions of an appreciative disposition on the part of the worshipper. The act of worship is never merely a means but is as truly an end, carrying with it its own satisfactions. It is the reaction of the individual or tribe to the most ultimate values which it is capable of conceiving. One mode of reaction will in many cases, to be sure, merge with the other, the practical and the appreciative will be operative side by side, but the attitudes are nevertheless distinct. True, we have attempted to trace the development of the appreciative out of the practical, but even if our theory should seem to be sustained, it would not support Frazer's

notion of the relationship of magic to religion. From his point of view that relationship is merely one of priority. From the point of view here presented, they are not two successive expedients. If religion in any sense follows magic, it does so because the latter has mediated the development of a new attitude, of conceptions of worthfulness quite beyond those which belong to itself.

Jevons, in his *Introduction to the History of Religion*, argues for the originality and independence of religion as far as magic is concerned, and in the same way disregards the genetic aspects of the developments of experience. He starts with practically the same assumption as Frazer, *i.e.* that religion is based on some sort of an idea of supernatural powers, but attempts to draw from it opposite conclusions. To prove his point he presupposes, in the peoples of primitive times, the differentiated experience of the culture-races. This procedure is, of course, unavoidable if one starts with such a definite concept for one's criterion, for the concept must be given the setting in the type of experience in which alone it is intelligible. Thus, in order to render the idea of the supernatural intelligible, Jevons tells us that for the primitive man the universe was like a vast workshop full of varied and complicated machinery, that his needs were pressing, and he could not take his time to "study the dangerous mechanism long and faithfully before setting his hand to it." [1] Action must be immediate. Again he tells us that for the savage there were 'innumerable possible causes' for what he saw about him, and in the midst of which he was turned loose with nothing to guide his choice as to which were the correct ones.[2] Concerning all this we should say that it is only from our point of view that this position is 'perilous' or the mechanism dangerous.

[1] *Introduction to the History of Religion*, p. 17.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

To the savage the universe does not present itself as a vast workshop of complicated machinery working at full speed. It is no more complicated to him than are the needs of which he is conscious. From the modern man's point of view these are multitudinous enough, but for him they are certainly few and simple. He is conscious of the vast and complicated universe present to our experience, only at the points where certain food and danger stimuli and the like affect him. (Is it different in kind for us?) It is as these necessities are met under varying conditions that other necessities are brought to consciousness. Thus, whatever may be the condition of the modern savage, the truly primitive man was most certainly not, as Jevons suggests, "surrounded by supernatural powers and a prey to supernatural terrors." [1] Neither need we suppose that 'he put forth his hand with dread.' The very recognition of such powers, and the corresponding adjustments of experience, are possible only in a stage of culture that has departed far from its primitive simplicity.

Such are the difficulties in Jevons's use of the supernatural. His point, of course, is that, if such an idea is present in the primitive mind, it will lead at once to worship and religion, for no one would be foolish enough to try to manipulate by magical practices that which was already by definition conceived as beyond calculation and control. The force of the argument rests on the supposition that the idea of the supernatural was present in the mind of the primitive man, with all the meaning and connotation that it might have for us.

Here, again, we object to the assumption that truly primitive man was possessed of the highly differentiated concepts of the present culture-races. Many of the natural races of the present show themselves quite deficient in many concepts familiar to the civilized man, and the primitive man could

[1] *Introduction to the History of Religion*, p. 35.

hardly have been better off than the modern savage. No doubt from the earliest times, however, situations and combinations of circumstances presented themselves which gave rise to attitudes and reactions functionally equivalent to certain attitudes of ourselves, so that, were we to bear in mind the functional equivalents of the primitive and the cultural attitudes, they might be compared and even classed together. But usually when the idea of the supernatural is attributed to primitive man, it is taken as ordinarily understood to-day, loaded with a lot of metaphysics and speculative material which it could scarcely have possessed for primitive intelligence.

The concept of the supernatural, as far as it is more than a mere name, that is, as far as it has a definite place in the movement of experience, is much the same in all stages of culture. It is a concept which tends to appear when some set of conditions interrupts a habitual process of any kind. It is not necessary, however, that there should be any definite formulation of the supernatural in such a time of stress The attention is rather focussed upon the problem of securing a more adequate adjustment of the means, as they are understood, to the end which, for the time, withstands ordinary methods of approach. The point of interest is the end which cannot be reached by the usual expedients rather than the expedients themselves, so that it is hardly possible for these to be differentiated very specifically into natural and supernatural. The idea of the supernatural is the extreme development of certain situations of tension, not the immediate result of them. To the savage of to-day the supernatural seems to be little more than that phase of a situation that must be treated with the greatest care, and it seems very unlikely that Jevons is right in saying that at the very beginning man was conscious of a 'mysterious power which was beyond his cal-

culation and control.' Without doubt the idea of such a power did develop in time, that is, the notion of a vague, impersonal force, similar, possibly, to the Algonkin notion of *manitou* or to the Melanesian concept, *mana*. It seems possible, also, that this is a more primitive way of conceiving the forces of the natural world than that in terms of spirits. This conception is, however, not that of *supernatural* powers, but rather that of a certain mysterious element of the undifferentiated environment which must be reckoned with.

The problem, then, which confronts us, is that of determining the circumstances under which those types of action which are distinctively magical and distinctively religious stood out definitely in primitive man's reaction to his world. The supposition is not that man was at one time irreligious, but rather that his experience was too simple to make a religious reaction possible. The same must be said of magic. In and so far as they have elements which are similar functionally, religion and magic originally formed a part of a primitive, undifferentiated attitude, and separated from each other as experience became more complex and the requirements of action more varied. The primitive attitude involved the simplest conscious adjustments of the human species to the most immediate and pressing problems of the life-process. It involved habits and customs with reference to these needs and the beginnings of efforts to mediate ends of which the first crude impulses had fallen short. The accumulation of habits about various centres of spontaneous interest, such as gathering fruits, capturing game, the act of procreation, birth, the coming to maturity, death, and the like, laid a foundation for a more intense valuation of those centres of interest.[1]

[1] It is here fully realized that the religions and practices of the natural races of to-day cannot be taken as truly primitive. Every current system of thought

Obscure as are the beginnings of culture, it is possible, as has already been suggested, that man's first philosophy, in so far as a purely naïve conception of things can be called a philosophy, was not an animistic one, that is, it was not a conception of the world as pervaded by, or moved by, a greater or less number of conscious spiritual agencies.[1] It was more

and practice has doubtless been preceded by a long line of changes, of which, in the main, we know nothing. Almost indefinite possibilities exist as far as specific details of the past of any savage race are concerned. As Andrew Lang says, if we find a people with magic and no religion, how do we know but that they once had gods and despaired of them. And this is very true except that a people probably does not lose its gods because it despairs of them, but because it forgets them, having its attention turned to new situations which no longer suggest the old deities. While we cannot reconstruct the prehistoric development of any present race, we can detect certain methods of development in the present which suggest at least some of the characteristics of truly primitive life. We can certainly say that psychical processes followed much the same lines of development, and that the objects of interest were not intrinsically different from those of to-day. If this be granted, we may suppose that the results of these processes, in connection with the objects of interest which they must have had, were fairly similar to the results of to-day. In other words, the application of psychology to social phenomena reveals a certain method in social changes which it is legitimate to use within limits. When, therefore, such a writer as Professor Ladd asserts that primitive man is a fiction, he is partly right but also quite wrong. While we can form no accurate picture of truly primitive conditions, we know enough about the natural races of the present to determine the natural history of many of their ideas, beliefs, and practices. The observed facts of the anthropologist point to fairly definite conclusions. It is certainly better to start with these facts than to start with some *a priori* philosophical conception such as that all men have and always have had a religious instinct or impulse. When Professor Ladd says that man has always been religious, he certainly postulates something of primitive man. In other words, primitive man is a fiction for Professor Ladd when he deals with theories opposed to his own, but as far as his own theory is concerned, primitive man is far from a fiction. (*Vide Philosophy of Religion*, G. T. Ladd.) It means nothing to say all men have religion, unless we are able to say what kind of a religion it is. There is no such thing as religion in general. The same criticism would apply to Sabatier's statement that 'man is incurably religious.'

[1] Cf. with the ordinary theory as expressed by Jevons, *Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion*, p. 89, "Animism is a stage of belief lower than which or back of which science does not profess to go."

probably an attitude related to the widely current savage belief of to-day that there is in nature an impersonal, semi-mechanical force which man can to some extent use to his advantage. Of course this attitude toward the world, wherever it appears, is interwoven with human action and determines it to a certain extent. It does not, however, follow that it has been related in any peculiar way to the development of either religion or magic. Although this may have been a truly primitive way of looking at things, it is not now, and hence probably never was, a critical or reflective theory. The primitive man of to-day has no philosophy regarding this 'force.' He experiences the greatest difficulty in telling what he really thinks at all. An attitude toward the world is not of necessity an outcome of reflection. It may be the almost mechanical outcome of one's contact with his immediate environment. Possibly all our attitudes begin in this way, and vary only in the degree in which they become subjects of reflection and of criticism. The savage is thus possessed with what we may call an instinctively formulated environment, to which he reacts as a matter of course, and only with great effort, if at all, can he abstract a particular phase of that environment and think of it by itself. Almost all observers emphasize this inability of the natural races. Methods of action and views of things are almost invariably taken as matters of course. Seldom can they stand off from any phase of their life and survey it critically in view of its avowed function. It seems, therefore, hardly likely that any type of action, such as magic, could have grown up as the definite expression of any isolable feature of their life. The simple, unreflective world-view, together with the half-instinctively recognized necessities of the life-process, result in multitudes of activities which are as undifferentiated as is the type of consciousness expressed in them. Certain of these acts occur

in certain types of contexts, and in this way alone become the basis for peculiar types of mental attitudes. In this way they gradually differentiate, and, along with this breaking up into different kinds of acts, there appear different mental attitudes. Thus, we hold that both magical and religious practices are diverse growths, not from any particular theory or hypothesis regarding the world, but rather from the primitive complex of naïve reactions. As man's life increased in complexity, through the necessity of doing more and more things and meeting a greater variety of conditions, diverse mental attitudes would, as a matter of course, evolve, and the acts associated with the evolution of these attitudes would come to be their expression.

An examination of the acts usually classed respectively as magical or religious among the present natural races seems to bear out the above point of view. In innumerable cases they can be shown to be primarily the natural reaction of the psychophysical organism, almost its mechanical reflex, in situations of strain or relaxation, or to such conditions as require practical adjustments of some sort. In other words, they are the natural overflow of the organism toward its naïvely conceived world. Thus, Frazer speaks of the performance of various mimetic ceremonies by the women at home while the men are away on the war-path. In the Hindu Kush, when the men are out raiding the women abandon their work in the fields and assemble in the villages to dance day and night. It is easy to see that the women would naturally be anxious and excited under such circumstances, and their emotional tension would easily find outlet in dancing, together with various acts imitative of things their lords were possibly doing. In fact, the imitative acts, far from being designed to assist the warriors in some magical way, have every suggestion of being ideomotor in origin, that is, not consciously designed

to accomplish any end, such as assisting the men, but the spontaneous outflow of action along the line of that which absorbed their attention. Just as when we see a struggle, or even think of one very intently, we often find ourselves making movements as if we were actually in the fray itself, so the women of a tribe, with their minds full of the fighting that might be in progress, would find themselves actually acting it out in a fragmentary way at home, or, if their excitement did not take such a definite form, it is at least easy to see how they might be too wrought up to continue their accustomed work, and how, as they met together, excited activity of some sort, whether mimetic or not, would inevitably result.

So much for the origin of such acts. It is easy to see how they might later acquire a teleological significance. In the course of time some one might reflect upon them and come to believe that they were essential to the success of the war party. For instance, upon one occasion, the women might not have felt their accustomed anxiety and have continued their ordinary work. If the men came back worsted, they might think of their own conduct and attribute the defeat to it. Or suppose they should sometimes dance, not because of their anxiety, but from force of habit. Possibly it would never occur to *them* to explain the reason for so doing; but if at a later time they should be asked why, the whole series of acts, the fighting of the men and their own mimes and their dancing, would be so bound together in custom that they could only think of them as connected in a very real way, the performance of one even conditioning the success of the other.

Frazer also mentions the practice of the Carib Indians severely beating two lads at the time their warriors were engaged in battle. Here, again, the cause need be nothing more than mere ideomotor suggestion. The stay-at-homes

might conceivably fight with each other from pure excitement, and this somewhat painful exercise would be reduced in time to merely beating lads who could not easily strike back.

In most instances of acts of a magical character, it seems quite possible, then, that they can be most easily explained as having been originally the direct outcome of certain simple psychical conditions. The *theory* of magic would gradually evolve from these preëxisting practices, and, under certain conditions, the religious attitude would also arise from them. They are, in other words, a stratum of unreflective reactions whose origin may be perfectly accounted for in terms of the recognized forms of psychophysical activity, out of which the more specialized reactions of magic and religion may grow. The typical act of sympathetic magic, that in which a man makes an image of his enemy and roasts it or pricks it, that pain or death may come to the enemy, was more than likely in the first instance a spontaneous psychophysical reaction. A man, temporarily or absolutely prevented from attacking an enemy, might find relief from his wrought-up state of mind in an imitative attack upon him, or, in the first instance, with his mind full of the attack, he might have struck or hacked at a stake or tree. Under the same conditions he might even make an image of the enemy. Every detail of the act of sympathetic magic may thus be seen to have been possible prior to any theory of magical influences. The theory itself, as has been pointed out, is not intellectually framed, but is rather merely the vague consciousness of a movement which is determined by association of ideas and has as its sustaining force the inertia of habit.

We hold, therefore, that the mass of customs, of no ostensible religious or magical motive, possessed by all peoples are of peculiar significance because, by revealing so clearly their psychological origin, they furnish an important clew

to the fundamental nature of what are now religious acts and magical acts. They are, in fact, the remnants of a great substratum of habit which, largely by accident of circumstance, never became incorporated into the movements of experience which eventually crystallized in magic and religion. They may be regarded indifferently as religion or as magic in the most primitive form of these beliefs. Such a theory regarding these customs does not carry with it the assumption that they are literal remnants of truly primitive life; for of such life we can know nothing. The point is simply that, whatever their history has been, they represent now the simplest results of the reaction of the psychical organism to its environment, results unreconstructed by reflection and ungarnered by religion or magic. We believe that it is possible at any stage of culture for relatively primitive types of action to occur. Granted a psychophysical organism with fairly constant basic needs but without much development of reflection, and in an unmodified natural environment the forms of action which appear will not vary widely in different stages of culture. The more or less automatic results of the psychophysical mechanism should be the starting-points of all attempts to explain human customs, institutions, and beliefs. These results are present and practically constant in all ages and stages of culture.

The following are illustrations of these simple customs which, as we have suggested, are possibly not to be classified as either magical or religious. They may fairly be called magic and religion in their most primitive form. Among the Central Eskimo, "There are numerous regulations governing hunting, determining to whom the game belongs, and the obligations of the successful hunter towards the inhabitants of the village." [1]

[1] Franz Boas, "The Central Eskimo," *The Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, pp. 581 f.

There are very strict rules prohibiting in any way the contact of land and sea game. Thus, deer meat must not be eaten the same day with seal. When skinning deer, the hunter must avoid breaking a single bone. Bits of different parts of the animal must be cut off and buried in the ground or under stones. On the west shore of Hudson Bay, dogs are not allowed to gnaw deer bones during the deer-hunting season, nor seal bones in the season of seals. Potstone must always be bought from the rock where it is obtained. In one section the natives address a large rock and bid it farewell in passing. At a certain dangerous cape they always shake the head and mutter in passing.[1] (It may well be that all of these customs are involved with the belief in a mysterious mechanical agency analogous to the Siouan *wakonda;* even so, they would remain legitimate illustrations of the point we here make.)

The following customs apparently belong to the same category as those of the Eskimo mentioned above. In Central Australia, when men start out upon an avenging expedition, each member of the party drinks some blood and also has some spurted over his body that he may be lithe and active.[2] Among these same tribes, a mother, a few days after childbirth, cuts off the part of the umbilical cord still remaining attached to the child, swathes it in fur strings, makes it into a necklace, and places it about the child's neck. It is supposed to facilitate the growth of the child, to keep it quiet and contented, to avert illness generally, and has the faculty of deadening to the child the noise of the barking of the camp dogs.[3]

Among the Thompson Indians of British Columbia, if a person bathes in the river, he must do so below, and not above, fishing platforms, as the salmon are affected a mile or two

[1] "The Central Eskimo," Franz Boas, *The Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, pp. 581 f.

[2] Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes*, etc., p. 461. [3] *Ibid.*

below the place where a person bathes. Children are forbidden to mention the name of the coyote in winter-time for fear that the animal may turn on his back and immediately bring cold weather by so doing. Again, if a person burns the wood of trees that have been struck by lightning, the weather will immediately turn cold. The death or burial of a person causes an immediate change in the weather. A certain root was chewed and then spit out against the wind to cause a calm. To burn the feathers of the ptarmigan or the hair of the mountain goat will cause sudden cold weather or a snow-storm.[1] A woman should not eat in the morning if going out to dig roots or to rob the nests or the stores of squirrels. If she fails to observe this rule, either she will not find the nests or they will be empty.[2] In some of the Melanesian Islands it is common for a native who wishes to descend a steep hill or cliff to pile up some sticks at the top to insure a safe descent. There is no thought of a sacrifice in this act, nor does any prayer accompany it.[3] Many volumes of such regulations might be collected from the accounts we possess of the natural races, detached customs which are little more than habits, possibly to a certain extent growing out of the belief in a mysterious potency, but sharing few of the distinguishing char-

[1] James Teit, "The Thompson Indians," *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. II, p. 374.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 348–349.

[3] Codrington, *Melanesians*.

NOTE. — Professor F. B. Jevons, in his *Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion*, 1908, pp. 72 ff., also distinguishes magical from premagical rites or practices. His discussion had not appeared when the foregoing paragraphs were written, but it is, nevertheless, gratifying to discover this testimony to a similar point of view. His distinction is much the same as that made here, and which is further worked out in later sections of this chapter, viz., that, while premagical practices are generally known and open to all alike, those of magic are not so well known and are practised in secret by the few, and are therefore feared by the masses.

acteristics of magic or religion. They belong to what we call the 'do-or-avoid-this-or-that-performance-lest-something-happen' type of action. The practices of magic are more definite. They are explicit attempts to reduce recalcitrant forces to the whim of the practitioner.

Many of those who have written upon the subject of magic lay great stress upon an axiom, supposedly held by primitive man, that 'like produces like.' Possibly such a conception of natural causation may, in time, have been constructed, but, if such were the case, we believe that it was the result of magical practices rather than their presupposition. Many of the instances that seem to be based upon a theory of like producing like can be explained as purely spontaneous reactions, frequently the outcome of situations of emotional tension, or acts which have clung together through the peculiar way in which they were first associated. In most of these cases we believe it is an afterthought that the acts have an efficacy of any sort.[1] As far as primitive man states to himself the cause of the efficacy of a magical rite, it is largely that such a rite sets free, or renders active not spirits, but that mystic potency with which he believes nature is surcharged.[2] This notion is much simpler than the so-called axiom that 'like produces like,' and it has contributed largely to the development of such customs as we have mentioned above. When a man whistles to produce a wind, or eats the flesh of a tiger that he may become bold, he is simply trying to avail himself of some of this pervasive mystic potency. When *he* whistles, he imagines he is exerting his own potency to accomplish what he thinks the trees do when they whistle and groan and sigh and the wind blows, or what the Sioux thinks he sees the buffalo bull doing, when, before a fight, he paws the dust, thus pro-

[1] *Supra*, p. 179.

[2] *Supra*, p. 177, also Chapter VI, "The Mysterious Power."

ducing a small whirlwind. The Indian does not believe that confusion will come to the buffalo's foe through any principle of like producing like, but because the buffalo in this way sets free his *wakonda*, and this causes the confusion. While Jevons, in his *Study of Comparative Religion* (chapter on "Magic"), assumes that magic is based upon the axiom which we have just criticised, he qualifies his view in an appended note, admitting that it is through the exercise of 'power,' especially by a magician, that such effects as that of killing a man by stabbing his effigy are supposed to occur, rather than by the element of likeness between stabbing a real man and doing the same to his effigy.

Superstitious beliefs such as the above are, of course, analogous to the many detached superstitions persisting to-day in the lower strata of civilized society. Many of these, to be sure, may be remnants of genuine magical and religious beliefs, but many others are in all probability vestiges of primitive man's crude associations or of his spontaneous and unreflective reactions. Much of the material collected by Dr. Frazer from the peasant beliefs and customs of present-day Europe, and which he interprets as magic, belongs, we believe, to this primordial substratum.

We have been advancing the hypothesis that magic and religion are differentiations from a primitive substratum of crude associations and spontaneous reactions. We have given some illustrations which seem to point to the reality of such a substrate. If we turn to practices which are avowedly magical, we find it possible, in a very large number of cases, to show a real kinship between them and this more primitive type. Distinctly magical practices which can thus quite clearly be traced back to spontaneous reactions of the psychophysical organism occur among the Central Australians. It is, of course, impossible to say whether these partic-

ular customs have had *only* such an origin, but it is certainly a safe hypothesis that they have at least developed through the suggestion or the imitation of practices which did so originate. Every native in this portion of Australia believes he can injure another by pointing at him a stick or bone, which has been sung over. This practice is clearly an outgrowth of anticipatory acts or of acts performed because the real onslaught is either impossible or impracticable under the circumstances. In the same way spears may be sung over and are thought to be able to inflict wounds beyond the power of the medicine-man to cure. The hair of a dead man is considered for certain of his tribe to be a very efficient magical instrument. A girdle made of such material is supposed to add to its possessor all the warlike qualities of the person from whom it was made.[1] The practice here described is quite clearly to be explained on the ground of the law of association. It would be natural for the relatives of a dead man to desire to keep some portion of him which would be relatively permanent, and it would be easy for them to associate with this hair whatever peculiar capacities he was known to possess, until, finally, those capacities would be thought of as inherent in the hair itself and capable of transmission through it. For the same reasons the dead man's fur-string girdle and head-bands are held in high esteem.

The Australian method of procuring wives by magic is a further, and a very clear, evidence of the theory here presented of the development of magical rites. As described by Spencer and Gillen, they seem to be just such acts as a man might tend to perform as his attention was engrossed with the thought of a certain woman and with the desire to obtain her for his wife. Thus, he may wear a charmed head-band before the woman, which is a generally recog-

[1] Spencer and Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 539.

nized sign of love, and of course the woman who discovers it is directed to her would be affected by it in much the same way that a modern white woman might be moved by a verbal proposal. It is simply a conventional and recognized way of indicating one's desires, and the savage who explains everything in terms of mysterious influences can see no other means of interpreting the reactions of the psychophysical organism to the stimuli which affect it. In the same way the flageolet is the lover's signal among some of the Plains Indians of North America,[1] and here, also, the natural response of the woman was explained through the influence of some magic power. Another perfectly natural, but from the Australian point of view magical, method of securing a wife is to attract her by a much-valued shell ornament, which the suitor wears at a corrobbree, and makes it a point that the desired one sees the symbol of his wish. Many of their other methods fall into the same class as the above. An interesting illustration of a magical act which is the almost mechanical outcome of association is that of these same people who seek to increase the growth of the whiskers in young men through rubbing their chins with the *Churinga* (the sacred object or emblem) of the rat totem (their rat being distinguished by very long whiskers). Here, as in all cases, the simple native passes spontaneously and unreflectively over from one object to an associated object, and as unreflectively thinks of the second object as possessed of the powers or qualities of the first.[2]

A further illustration of the connection of a supposedly magical rite with acts which are the quite spontaneous expression of an intensely emotional state of mind is the following

[1] Wissler, Clark. "The whirlwind and the elk in the mythology of the Dakota," *Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. XVIII, p. 261.

[2] See chapter on "The Mysterious Power," p. 148.

method of punishing a man who has stolen a wife, but who belongs to a group which is either too far away or too powerful to make an open fight desirable or prudent. The husband, with the assistance of another man, prepares a small stone knife-blade of quartzite or flint, which, with various accessories, is sung over and left in the sun in a secluded spot for some days. The men go to it every day and sing over it the request that it kill the man who stole the woman. Finally, it is thrown with great force in the direction of the enemy. The men then wait in silence, crouched in a very uncomfortable position, sometimes for several hours, until they imagine they hear the spirit in the stone, asking from a great distance where the man is. They then return to the camp and listen for a great noise which indicates to them that the sharp stone has found the man and killed him.[1] This procedure is, of course, quite highly developed, but each act might apparently have been originally just such a spontaneous outburst as would be made by a distracted person who could find no direct means of inflicting punishment upon his adversary.

Illustrations of this sort might be multiplied almost indefinitely. Some of them are primarily practical adjustments, but most of them are activities of an accessory character, that is, acts in which emotional tensions have found relief, or excess activities at the time of relief from much emotional tension. The greater number of the customs collected by Frazer in *The Golden Bough*, as illustrations of the prevalence of magic in primitive culture, fall, as suggested above,[2] into this class, and are not strictly magical activities at all.

If these practices had chanced to be more closely associated with the evolution of tribal consciousness and tribal interests, they might have furnished the nuclei of rituals and definite

[1] Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.*, pp. 548 ff.

[2] *Supra*, p. 186.

religious ideas. If they had been more closely connected with lines of individual interest, so as to have furnished a technique available to the individual for carrying out his personal desires, they would have formed the basis of magic. Thus the custom referred to of piling some sticks at the top of a steep hill to insure a safe descent has the appearance of an embryonic religious sacrifice. But the occasion for it is not insistent enough, nor does it require any concerted attention on the part of a social group, so that religious values can scarcely develop through it. On the other hand, such a custom does not have sufficiently close connection with daily individual interests to make it possible for any general technique for dealing with these interests to develop from it.

Magic has been called primitive man's science because it offers a more or less definite method of manipulating nature for practical purposes. While this is a good working conception, it is worth while to remember that its roots go down into the natural reactions made by the psychophysical organism in certain kinds of situations, rather than to any speculative hypothesis regarding nature. Both magic and religion are based upon processes already going on in the social body, some practical, others accessory, and all more or less non-reflective and spontaneous. Some of these processes, as we have said, are quite definitely related to social ends and aims; others have less definite connections of this sort, that is, they seldom hold the attention of the group for long periods, nor do they enter, in any marked way, into the activities in which the group engages; possibly they relate to ends or impulses which are distinctly anti-social, such as the injury of a fellow-tribesman because of personal jealousy. In these cases the act either does not interest the group as a whole in such a manner that the latter sees in it the expression of a communal desire, or it arouses its antipathy because of its

being secret and hence inimical to the well-being of the community.

As far as the form of the action and its origin are concerned, there is, then, originally, a practical identity between magic and religion. They involve, however, different motives, and therefore develop along different lines. Since each is a development from a common stock of ideas and forms of action, the ultimate diversity illustrates most vividly how difference in motive and social context can modify or even determine an evolutionary series. In the following pages we hope to make clear how the peculiar characteristics of magic may be thus explained.

In the first place, let us note the status of magic in the primitive societies known to us. In practically every direction we find that the sorcerer is one who deals privately with secret powers, or at least with means not generally known to the group, and the object is almost always private gain or personal vengeance. The peculiarity of the sorcerer, Lyall says, is that he does everything without help of the gods. It begins "when a savage stumbles on a few natural effects out of the common run of things, which he finds himself able to work by unvarying rule of thumb."[1] This writer further says, in substance, that religion is divided from magic by its characteristics of inspiration, adorations, vows, and oracles, while magic is a system of thaumaturgy by occult, incomprehensible arts.[2] The priest serves a god, while the sorcerer makes a demon serve him. The contrast here drawn is not comprehensive, nor is it accurate in detail, but it suggests the line of cleavage which we have attempted to make.

[1] Sir Charles Lyall, *Asiatic Studies*, p. 79, 1st series.

[2] Cf. Jevons, *Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion*, p. 95, for the same view.

The fact that magic is individualistic and more or less private is strikingly illustrated by Rivers' experience in his study of the Todas. He found the greatest difficulty in learning anything definite regarding their magic. Those who knew were evidently afraid to reveal the fact, and many were entirely ignorant of the nature of the sorcerers' machinations, and expressed themselves as very desirous that their secret workings be uncovered. The actual powers reputed to belong to the Toda sorcerer bear out fully the theory of magic here proposed. He is supposed to be able to inflict various injuries upon a man who has in any way offended him. His methods are distinctly private and his end personal. Another striking fact is the differentiation between the priest, or dairyman, and the diviner, medicine-man, and sorcerer. The dairyman is, in a way, the functionary of the social group, while the sorcerer is merely an individual who has in some way acquired special powers which he uses for his own ends. He is believed to be able to cause sickness or death in the family or among the buffaloes; he can cause the buffaloes' milk to fail, or he can make them kick their calves. He may also keep the milk from coagulating, may cause the dairies to burn down, or the bells to be lost, and all to satisfy private grudges.[1]

Among the tribes of the Niger Delta, it is believed that "Any person who owes another a grudge can, and does, inflict mortal injury on that person," by magical means.[2] These negroes believe that there is a witch society in every community, the doings of which are shrouded in great mystery. There *are* very likely crafty and scheming persons, who play upon the people to such an extent that they, in their heated imagination, picture them as far more numerous than they

[1] *The Todas*, Chap. XII.

[2] A. G. Leonard, *The Lower Niger and its Tribes*, London, 1906, p. 480.

really are. Leonard, from an intimate acquaintance with these tribes, says, referring to their belief in magic: "It is possible to recognize at the very outset two landmarks: the first being the entire absence of the ancestral element [which is present more or less in their religion]; and the second, the fact that the powers utilized by the exponents of magic are natural, and of the element of evil, pure and simple," as over against those things which make for social harmony and for social good.[1]

Kidd, in writing of the Kafirs, says that witchcraft is regarded by them as being private, illicit, and anti-social in its use of the forces of nature. They have also a technique of public magic, which is used for the benefit of the whole tribe.[2] When the rites of magic are thus appropriated by the tribe for public use, they are inevitably more or less socialized, and, it is likely, begin to partake of the nature of religion. If ever there is a meeting-place between magic and religion, it must be among those groups which have thus developed a social type of magic from that which must, originally, have been individualistic. The following are a few further illustrations of many that might be given: —

"The Sia have something as appalling to them as the return of the dead, in their belief in witchcraft, those possessing this craft being able to assume the form of dogs and other beasts."

"They create disease by casting into the body snakes, worms, stones, bits of fabric." The theurgists of the secret societies are able, however, to cope with them.[3] So among the Central Eskimo,[4] the *angakoq*, a conjurer or medicine-man, is really a tribal functionary who has many ceremonies

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 479.
[2] *Kafir Socialism*, Dudley Kidd, 1908, p. 21.
[3] *Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, 1889–1890, p. 68.
[4] Boas, *op. cit.*, p. 592.

by which to drive off spirits. His principal office is to find the reason for sickness and death or any misfortune visiting the natives. Storms and bad weather are conjured by them by taking a whip of seaweed and waving it on the beach and crying, 'It is enough.' We have record also of an apparently magical rite performed by an Eskimo community. A village united to kill an evil spirit that had been causing bad weather.[1] There are several classes of medicine-men among the Ojibwa, one of which is organized into a secret society, and deals with matters of public concern and is distinctly religious in character, while the others are more or less private in their activities, and are responsible for the type of magic which is so much dreaded by the Indians. Among the tribes of Central Australia "every man may have recourse to what is usually spoken of as sorcery, by means of which he may work harm of some kind to an enemy, and this power is not in any way confined to the medicine-men, though on the other hand they are the only men who can counteract the evil influence of an enemy." [2]

It is an interesting question as to why the treatment of disease among savage peoples has been so fully taken up by magic rather than by religion. The answer seems to be that although sickness and death are matters of interest to the group, they are more or less uncertain as to times and occasions; it is something that must necessarily interest some few more than the whole group. To be sure, after a death, it may become a matter of group concern to guard against the departed spirit, but before death the sick man is a problem requiring the attention and skill of some individual. Or perhaps the treating of sickness by magic originates in the fact that it is supposed to be caused by magic, and hence must be

[1] Boas, *op. cit.* [2] Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.*, p. 530.

counteracted by a similar force. But as the cause of sickness we can detect the individual character of magic as opposed to religion. The medicine-man who cures, on the other hand, represents the tribe in its desire to keep itself intact against the wiles of malicious individuals.

There is, we believe, no generalization concerning savage practices which may be made with greater assurance than this, that magic is relatively individualistic and secret in its methods and interests, and is thus opposed fundamentally to the methods and interests of religion, which are social and public. This individualistic and secret character of magic makes it easy for it to become the instrument of secret vengeance, as we have seen above. There is no primitive society, as far as our accounts have gone, which does not dread the sorcerer. Everywhere there is a clear-cut distinction between the sorcerer, who deals secretly with unfamiliar agencies, and the priest or medicine-man, who works for the public good. In some cases the latter uses 'good magic,' and in some the recognized technique of religion, and it is difficult to separate the one clearly from the other, as far as the attitude of mind involved is concerned. Public magic is to all intents and purposes organic with primitive religion. On the other hand, when religion becomes subservient to anti-social or to merely private ends, it is scarcely to be distinguished from sorcery. Among the Tshi-speaking tribes of West Africa it is possible for an individual to seek out some spirit and ally himself with it, in the same way that a clan or village may seek among the undomesticated spirits for a tutelary deity. Such an individual spirit has one most important function: to work, according to the will of its possessor, evil of all kinds against the latter's enemies. When an individual resorts to such a spirit, the request which he has to prefer is such as he dare not make publicly to the clan god, the guardian of the

interests of the community and of tribal morality. Customs such as these are scarcely to be distinguished from magic. They have to do with the occasional interest, the private grudge; there is no abiding consciousness of value built up by means of them, as in the case of religious rites where all join together at stated intervals to celebrate matters of general and abiding interest. This contrast is brought out in the following from Nassau:[1] "In the great emergencies of life, such as plagues, famines, deaths, funerals, and where witchcraft and black art are suspected, the aid or intervention of special fetiches is invoked. . . . But for the needs of life day by day, with its routine of occupations whose outgoings are known and expected, the Bantu fetich worshipper depends upon himself and his regular fetich charms, which indeed were made either at his request by a doctor, or by himself on fetich rule obtained from a doctor. . . . The worshipper keeps these amulets and mixed medicines hanging on the wall of his room or hidden in one of his boxes. But he gives them no regular reverence or worship, no sacrifice or prayer, until such times as their services are needed. . . . These needs come day by day" in "hunting, warring, trading, lovemaking, fishing, planting, or journeying."

The reaction of the group against sorcery, or magic, seems to be primarily the assertion of the consciousness of the group, as expressed or organized in recognized customs, against the individual who departs from known methods of action and seeks to accomplish ends of his own by secret means. It is the reaction of the familiar and public against the unknown and private. In this opposition between magic and religion, we have the beginnings of a conflict which has continued up until our own day, that is, the conflict between science and religion. Since religion is in large measure the

[1] *Fetichism in West Africa*, pp. 172, 173.

appreciation of values, a thing which is rendered possible only through the formation of habits and associations about the end or object valued, it must always possess more or less inertia, more or less of a tendency to resist change or innovation. Hence it instinctively looks with suspicion upon all individual initiative, especially as this finds play in magic, or later in genuine science.

The connection of magic with the mysterious is well illustrated by the tendency of all primitive peoples to attribute magical powers to people with whom they have little intercourse. Thus, the members of the lowest stratum of society in India, *i.e.* the Dravidians, are regarded as magicians, *par excellence*, by the higher classes.[1] The Todas dread the sorcery of the Korumbas, a lower race, far more than that of their own magicians.[2] Among the Central Australians, distant and unfamiliar tribes are supposed to be experts in magic.[3]

In connection with the fact that magic has to do with the private and mysterious as over against the social, it is of some importance to note that the practiser of magic is usually recognized as a peculiarly gifted individual, having through his own effort or initiative these special powers. The making of a medicine-man is, moreover, never a public function. A man acquires such powers only through his own subjective effort, or through the help of another medicine-man. Thus, among the Central Australians the sorcerer may acquire his powers either through the agency of some supposed spirits, or through the help of others of the same craft. In either case the process is a private and individual affair.

[1] Crooke, William, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India.*

[2] Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 263.

[3] Spencer and Gillen, Vol. I, p. 541. Cf. also Tylor, E. B., *Primitive Culture*, Vol. I, pp. 102 ff., for many similar illustrations.

When a man feels he is capable of becoming a sorcerer, he ventures away from the camp quite alone, until he comes to the mouth of the cave where the spirits dwell. The series of strange experiences which follow need not be described here. Suffice it to say that they are essentially like those commonly occurring among all savage peoples in similar situations, and that they depend upon the psychic mechanism of self-suggestion.

Among the Niger tribes, the education of the sorcerer is again private and largely a subjective process. The novice gains his power through one who is already possessed of the magic potency. Having been instructed by the sorcerer in the "mysteries of the Great Mother, the master of divination turns him out into the bush all by himself to the contemplation of the mysteries which lie around him," and that he may commune with his other self. The results of this period of seclusion are of the same general nature as in the case of the Australians. In this way the novice imagines he comes into possession of special powers.[1]

Among the Todas the diviners and sorcerers are people reputed to have unusual powers. In many cases the power of divination is inherited from some near relative, but "any one who showed the evidence of the necessary powers might become a diviner." [2] The Toda sorcerers are said to belong to special families, and each one probably communicates his power to one or more of his sons. Here, then, again, the phenomena of magic are such as pertain to the individual rather than to the influence of the group consciousness. Among the Sakai of the Malay Peninsula, the magician had peculiar power which had been bequeathed to him by his ancestors. Through this power he was supposed to be able to bring health or misfortune and disease upon his fellows.

[1] Leonard, *op. cit.* [2] Rivers, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

In all these cases, and they are certainly representative, there is the constant suggestion that the worker in magic deals with some mysterious power, a power which is impersonal, even though it be conferred by spirits. That there is some connection, if not an identity, between this power and that of the 'mystic potence' referred to earlier in this chapter, and discussed at length in another chapter, seems highly probable to the present writer. Magic, then, has to do with the private and sometimes nefarious use of this cosmic force. How this same conception has played a part in the development of religion we shall see in the chapter upon the development of deistic ideas.

We have had repeated occasion to emphasize the importance of the social atmosphere in the development of religious ideas. It will be instructive, in concluding this chapter, to note how it is through the lack of this social factor that magic has developed many of its peculiar characteristics. Certain means suggest themselves as available in a social situation that would not in other situations come to consciousness. This is easily conceivable when we reflect that the means that do come to consciousness are always more or less the result of association by contiguity. With primitive man and with ourselves it is not the inherent connection of things that is taken into account, but simply the elements of a situation that are commonly and prominently before the attention. Hence the particular development of a system of mediation and control will depend largely upon the actual elements in the situation in which it develops. Merely by way of illustration, undoubtedly one of the important elements in any primitive social structure is the system of ideas connected with the ancestors of the group. The very social consciousness tends to retain as a part of itself the members who have passed away as well as the living. We are not, of

course, suggesting that religion originates in ancestor-worship, but simply that the idea of ancestors is one of the elements in social consciousness, and a very primitive one, too. No better illustration of this can be found than the myths of the Central Australians concerning the *Alcheringa*, to which we have already referred. As we have seen, the *Alcheringa*, without being really worshipped, are bound up with nearly all the ceremonies. We have also seen how many of the ceremonies of the Kwakiutl Indians originate in the adventures of an ancestor, as also the Mountain Chant of the Navaho. It is thus by no means theoretical that the customs of a tribe are involved with the idea of their ancestors, whether these latter are worshipped or not. If it came to be believed that they could exert an important *rôle* in the mediation of tribal needs, the activities associated with them would easily assume the form of worship, or would tend to adapt themselves to the maintaining and keeping vital of the bonds of fellowship between the past and present portions of the group. As is well known, W. Robertson Smith has shown that sacrifice among the Semites was such a practical expedient.[1] Worship, with them, was a time of joyous communion. The interests of the tribe and the means of securing them would be inseparably connected with the various expressions of the tribal life and consciousness.[2] This connection of ancestors and spirits with mediating activities is possible only in the case of those activities which have developed within social groups, and the contrast here with magic is significant. For magic there are no ancestors, for there can be no definite consciousness of ancestors outside of a social group. For magic there would be only spirits, and these could scarcely have the definite and abiding char-

[1] *The Religion of the Semites*, Lectures VII, VIII.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 240 ff.

acter that is possessed by the spirit beings of religion, since they would lack the sustaining influence of a tribal consciousness. Under these conditions it would be an easy matter for sympathetic magic, as we know it, to develop, that is, a form of magic involving no reference to spirits and depending upon a supposed interrelation of things that are associated by contiguity or similarity.

By general consent, in so far as magic deals with spirits at all, it concerns itself with those which have no relation of good-will to man, no stated relation of any kind, in fact, but are simply wild and capricious. The distinction of gods and wild spirits made in some later stages of culture is further evidence of the connection of religion with the definite organization of a social body and of the more or less individual and non-social character of magic. The same author says also: "A supernatural being as such is not a god; he becomes a god only when he enters into some stated relation with men, or rather with some community of men. In the belief of the heathen Arabs, for example, nature is full of living beings of superhuman kind, the *jinn*, or demons. These *jinn* are not pure spirits, but corporeal beings, more like beasts than men. . . . Like wild beasts they have, for the most part, no friendly or stated relations with men, but are outside the pale of man's society, and frequent savage and deserted places far from the wonted tread of men. . . . The *jinn* are gods without worshippers, and a god who loses his worshippers goes back to the class from which he came, as a being of vague and indefinite powers who, having no personal relations to men, is on the whole to be regarded as an enemy. . . . In fact, the earth may be said to be parcelled out between demons and wild beasts on the one hand and gods and men on the other. To the former belong the untrodden wilderness with all its unknown perils, the wastes and jungles

that lie outside the familiar tracks and pasture-grounds of the tribe, and which only the boldest men venture upon without terror; to the latter belong the regions that man knows and habitually frequents, and within which he has established relations, not only with his human neighbors, but with the supernatural beings that have their haunts side by side with him." [1] We have quoted at length because the point is so clearly expressed that religion is connected with the familiar and the habitual, and this for primitive man is largely synonymous with his social group. Beyond this is the great world of the occasional and hence the mysterious. It would be only the more daring, and hence the few, the individuals, who would have dealings with this outer world. The contrast here drawn by Smith is, of course, based upon the studies made by him in the beliefs and customs of the primitive Semites. In the main we do not believe that the division is as marked as here represented. Whether a people make this definite separation between religion and magic probably depends upon an intricate combination of circumstances. The development of a strong tribal life, or definite tribal feelings such as evidently belonged to the Semites, as seen, for instance, in their sacrifices, which were originally communal festivals, would be an important factor in such a distinction.

The point we have wished to make in this discussion is not that religion is essentially social and magic essentially individual, but that the former develops most readily in the atmosphere of the group, and that the latter is relatively an individualistic affair. Magic is simply primitive man's science, and there is nothing to hinder the tribe from availing itself of the scientific knowledge in the hands of its members. Many social groups may and have adopted magical practices. Magic furnishes the community with a technique

[1] *Religion of the Semites*, pp. 112–114.

for doing many simple things. It is a postulate available for many emergencies, and it is conceivable that it might stand for an attitude of approach toward many possible difficulties without its practice, in any formulated way, becoming a part of social habit. As a postulate, it would lend itself to each individual in the meeting of his own difficulties. We can see that in multitudes of cases the difficulty would be only occasional, and in many others it would interest only the individual concerned. It is also easy to see that in a difficulty of either of these kinds the initiative of the individual would be largely called into play, if not in devising a new method, at least in adapting the old device to the new situation. Magic would thus be readily associated with the private individual, and in tribes in which the power of custom was strong, this particular aspect of magic, which, as we have reason to believe, is the larger aspect of it, would be outlawed. In communities of the opposite type, that is, those of loose organization, magic might be so thoroughly taken up by the group as to be indistinguishable from religion. Many of the North American Indian tribes illustrate this aspect of the development of magic. This is particularly true of the Plains Indians. Major Powell says, however, of the Indians in general:[1] "The medicine-man is an important functionary among all the tribes of North America, and medicine practices constitute an important element in the daily life of the Indian tribe. But medicine practices cannot be differentiated from religious rites and observances. The doctor is priest and the priest is doctor, the medicine-man is priest-doctor."

[1] *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, p. xlvi.

CHAPTER VIII

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE EVOLUTION OF THE RELIGIOUS ATTITUDE

THE tracing of some sort of an evolution in religious beliefs and practices has long been a favorite task with those engaged in the scientific study of religion. We have already pointed out [1] certain conditions under which the concept of evolution is applicable to the religious attitude. In the light of the material offered in Chapters IV and V, there are now some other phases of the question which require discussion.

We have shown that the religious attitude is an outgrowth from a social matrix of some sort, that it is, in fact, rather definitely related to the type of social organization prevailing within a group. To deal adequately with the problem of the evolution of religion, we should be able to formulate certain criteria for determining the relative degree of organization possessed by a given social body. We shall try presently to see to what extent this is possible. This will furnish a basis for some conclusions regarding the relationship which may subsist between different forms of primitive religion, and hence may reveal something as to the nature of the evolutionary series which it may be possible to trace in religious phenomena.

The point of view of most students of this subject has, unfortunately, been more or less determined by systematic considerations, and the procedure has often amounted to little more than a series of attempts to find in the various

[1] Chap. II, *supra*.

religions of different periods and stages of culture an embodiment, in greater or less degree, of some concept such as monotheism, the meaning of which is predetermined by the investigator, that is, carried over bodily as a perfectly determinable quantity from his own universe of ideas. It has also been common to work out in the same manner some supposedly evolutionary series such as the following. Beginning with fetichism, religions are said to pass through animism, naturalism, higher pantheism, henotheism, and ethical monotheism. All such schemes have a certain rough and ready merit, but at their best they fail to take into account important facts regarding religion, not the least of which is the great complexity of the data involved, so that the series, so painstakingly elaborated, is apt to be entirely spurious.

As we have seen, some investigators[1] have held that there is a germinal 'idea' or 'instinct' present in primitive religions which by degrees attains, or may attain, to more and more adequate expression, or that there have been successive 'revelations' of a certain concept among different peoples and in different times. The phenomena of the ethnic religions then divide themselves into real religion and into superstition. They are significant in proportion as they reveal some trace of this instinct, revelation, or whatever the primordial datum is taken to be; otherwise primitive beliefs are largely negative quantities. These views are really the direct descendants of the once prevalent idea that true religion was, in all essentials, originally revealed to man, and that, in so far as there has been any evolution, it has been, in the main, negative.[2] The adherents of the instinct type of theory can, of

[1] *E.g.* Max Müller, Tiele, Jastrow, and others; also H. R. Marshall, *Instinct and Reason.*

[2] For recent expositions of this point of view, cf. Nassau's *Fetichism in West Africa,* Chap. III, and Trumbull's *The Blood Covenant.*

course, stand for a positive evolution, but if they ever faced the problem in a detailed and thorough manner, they would apparently have some difficulty in showing how an instinct with no natural history could evolve in the terms of an unrelated economic, social, and intellectual *milieu*.

It is not, however, our purpose here to attempt a systematic criticism of these points of view, but rather merely to state that the resulting methods of treating religion throw over it a false simplicity, and that the problem of evolution in religion requires further and more critical examination. The theories above referred to have borrowed their concepts and method more or less directly from the biological sciences, where it is doubtless legitimate to arrange in series various types of structure, such as reproductive organs, nervous systems, and so forth. From such considerations some have come to the conclusion that the diverse forms of religion represent necessary stages in the development of the higher types of religion. But, even in biology, there are limitations to the significance of the series which may be constructed. Each animal and plant form stands at the end of a long process of development, and is in no sense actually intermediate between certain other existing forms. In an even greater degree the different manifestations of religion are discrete and non-continuous. Of course it is possible to arrange types of religion in a series in the same way in which types of animal structure may be arranged, but, for reasons which we shall develop, the seeming connections between the members are more than likely to be imaginary. In this connection the words of Galton are apposite: —

"Whenever search is made for intermediate forms between widely divergent varieties, whether they be of plants or of animals, of weapons or utensils, of customs, religion, or language, or of any other product of evolution, a long and

orderly series can usually be made out, each member of which differs in an almost imperceptible degree from adjacent specimens. But it does not at all follow, because these intermediate stages have been found to exist, that they were the very stages passed through in the course of evolution. Counter-evidence exists in abundance, not only of the appearance of considerable sports, but of their remarkable stability in heredity transmission. Many of the specimens of intermediate forms may have been unstable varieties whose descendants had reverted; they might be looked upon as tentative and faltering steps taken along parallel courses of evolution, and afterwards retraced." [1]

He who supposes that the method of biology can be applied offhand to social phenomena certainly falls into a serious error. The strictures which Galton urges are particularly applicable in the science of religion. True, the stages of culture known to us may be serially arranged, but it does not follow that the low-grade forms are preliminary steps to higher grades. Many of them are quite likely side developments on some plane of arrest, or unfruitful exaggerations of planes of culture that in some way lost the cue to progress, or got detached from its main stream. Conditions of this sort would be entirely possible, even if religious development consisted in the unfolding of some primitive instinct or 'perception of the infinite.' If, however, it can be shown that the religious attitude is a differentiation from the more immediate aspects of the life-process, that the one is an organic part of the other, neither of them possessing a primordial essence peculiar to itself, it would seem that the different phenomena called religious would be even more discrete than is the case with apparently related forms of animal

[1] *Natural Inheritance*, 1889, pp. 32, 33.

life. So complex are the elements which constitute, and so subtle are the forces which coöperate in the determination of any given social fact, it is generally unsafe to compare one with another as one might compare the reproductive systems of various plants. Only the primary life activities of different peoples can be so compared. Variations in these elementary processes bring about, on derived planes, indefinitely varied results. The forms of religion are so definitely parts of the social *milieu* which produces them that we cannot attempt to arrange them in a scale of higher and lower until we are able to evaluate the social background, and this is possible only so roughly that, with our present knowledge, the scaling of religions is scarcely worth attempting. That is to say, a group may be far advanced in certain aspects of its social organization while, paradoxically enough, it may be very backward in its economic development.[1] So of every other phase, in some respects the group may be progressive and in others backward or even degenerate. What, then, can we say of the relative status of such a group as compared with others which may show retardation or progress in still different ways?

Types of social organization are, we believe, closely related to the sort of problems which people have had to face, or to the particular aspects of the life-process which have chanced to attract their attention. In the face of some concrete economic difficulty, for instance, which engages the attention of all the individuals of a group, there would always be, sooner or later, some adjustment of the entire social body, and in time, perhaps, an actual development of a type of social structure which would be continuously able to deal adequately with the situation. Thus, under pressure of

[1] This general problem of unequal development is tersely discussed by E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, Vol. I, pp. 24 f. (1st ed.)

certain economic problems, a group may differentiate into various producing classes with intricate rules governing the sharing of food.[1] Various taboos grow out of the food problem, rules designed to limit the consumption of different foods to particular classes within the group. To guard (in part at least) against surprise from without, encampment rules develop.[2] In places where the maintenance of a unified social consciousness is necessary, there are elaborate initiation ceremonies attendant upon the entrance of the youth into manhood. Of such ceremonies among certain of the Australian natives,[3] Howitt says that they are intended to impart those qualities to the boys which will make them more worthy members of society. The totemic organizations of many primitive peoples is a further type of social differentiation which possibly has a connection with some phase of the life-process, although what the connection is is at present somewhat obscure. The origin of the exogamic type of social organization is also a matter of dispute.[4] It is quite possible that it was at the first an unconscious product of natural selection, but in its later development it has without doubt been consciously elaborated to an enormous extent. However that may be, whether its growth has been conscious or unconscious,[5] it certainly does represent an organized reaction of the social body to a practical situation.

A well-organized social group is, then, a society possessing sufficient solidarity to maintain and to enforce customs of

[1] Cf. Howitt, *Native Tribes of Southeast Australia*, p. 756. Nansen, *Eskimo Life*, also gives many illustrations of the same thing, as do other writers on the Eskimo.

[2] Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 776.

[3] *Op. cit.*, pp. 535 f., 549, 559.

[4] Cf. W. I. Thomas, "Psychology of exogamy," *Sex and Society*, pp. 175–197.

[5] Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

some sort with reference to exigencies of life in a natural environment, even though it have no political head or chieftainship of any sort. If a group has few insistent problems to face, we shall find within it little unification of custom and a low degree of social organization. This regulative social structure is the most primitive form of religion. Whether there is also present a religious *consciousness* or not, is a matter of indifference. If, however, mental attitudes are aroused in connection with these activities, they may be regarded as constituting the elementary religious consciousness.

To illustrate the above statements and make clear their bearing upon the problem of the evolution of religion, we may refer again to the Arunta of central Australia. As far as tribal organization and the various means of social control are concerned, these people are relatively advanced for an ethnic race. Their marriage system is worked out with elaborate detail, and they count descent through the male. And yet, according to their observers (Messrs. Spencer and Gillen), they have no system of chieftainship, neither theistic ideas of any sort, and their economic development, while it is in a way adapted to their natural conditions, is, nevertheless, most crude. Thus, while living in a climate that is sometimes very severe, they are unclothed, and their primary method of insuring an abundant supply of staple articles of food is based upon various and elaborate magical rites, so called, rather than upon even a feeble reconstruction of their food environment. They are said to have no religion because they have no notions of gods, and yet, if religion consists in certain mental attitudes and social functions rather than in a certain conceptual framework, we believe a good case for their religion can be made out. Now just as it would be difficult to determine, on the whole, the social status of such a group, because of the very unequal development of the various aspects of its life, so it would be

hard to say where its religion belongs, comparatively speaking, or to say offhand that it is related in any sequential fashion to the religion of some other group. Such a religion, granted that it is one, since it lacks the conceptual framework that is usually associated with even primitive faiths, must be determined solely by its functional relationships to the various expressions of group life. An attempt to work out a statement of the Arunta religion would make it quite clear that religions, generally, are so definitely the outcome of particular social conditions that no such external characteristics as fetichism, animism, theism, and the like, can place the religions of different groups in any vital relationship. A people which possesses no gods is not necessarily in a prereligious stage of development. It may have had deities, and, through some peculiar turn in its social and economic development, it may have lost them (*e.g.* the case of the Todas, mentioned in a following paragraph). Nor is a monotheistic belief an indication in every case of high religious plane. A tribe in the interior of Borneo, of low-grade social development, is said to believe in a supreme god, while tribes which are more advanced in many ways living along the coast are ordinary polytheists.[1]

Again, while the Arunta people, as before stated, have no theistic ideas, other tribes, on the southeast coast of Australia, have a concept of an 'All-father,' which, though remotely theistic in the tribes studied by Howitt,[2] attains among others the definite qualities of a deity who is revered and to some extent prayed to.[3] In these cases, and others of the sort, we can scarcely say that the religion of one tribe is superior to that of another, but rather that the evolution of the concepts of higher values has followed diverse lines and that the matrix

[1] Hose and MacDougall, "Men and animals in Sarawak," *Journal of Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXI, p. 213.

[2] *The Native Tribes of Southeast Australia.*

[3] Parker, *The Euahlayi Tribe*, Chap. II.

of social life, of which each is a part, must be taken into account in all attempts to valuate them. In other words, that there is no *direct* relation between the atheism of the Arunta and the monotheism of the Euahlayi.

One other illustration, out of many, may be given. The Todas of India, Rivers [1] tells us, have at present very vague ideas of deities; but they were once, he believes, quite definite. All the attention of these people is at present centred in their dairies and the rituals connected therewith. They seem to be losing an old religion, in which there were deities, and slowly evolving a new one, in which their highest value-concepts are symbolized in other than deistic terms. At least their religious ideas are changing, and this much, at any rate, seems clear, that, in some way, in the not very remote past, their interest in their old religion died out because that religion failed to express sufficiently the new interests which were gradually awakening among them. By some means, external conditions, possibly their economic environment, underwent radical change, and in time nothing was left in their lives to make the old ideas and rituals significant to them of any values.

We do not need to raise the question here as to whether the social organization of the peoples referred to above belongs to a high or low order of culture. In fact, even the simplest extant society is so complicated that it is usually highly developed in at least one of its phases. There are no doubt other sections of the natural races, more advanced in some phases of their culture, but having a less complex social structure than the Australians. We do not mean to advance the idea that social structure is in itself desirable, but simply that, with reference to the origin and development of the religious attitude, it seems to be of more importance than

[1] *The Todas.*

some of the other results of human evolution. The negroes of West Africa, referred to already, probably represent a more advanced status of culture, economically and politically, than do the Australians, but they do not possess that permanent solidarity of structure which imposes upon each individual a certain definite type of conduct[1] and restrains him from other types. Hence we can say that, while the Africans have manifold spirit-beliefs, their religion is in some respects of a lower grade than that of the Australians (*pace* Messrs. Howitt and Spencer and Gillen).

In turning from these illustrations, let us emphasize again that the terms 'fetichism,' 'animism,' or even 'monotheism,' have no special significance as blanket concepts to be applied right and left to the phenomena of primitive religion. The developmental series which may be worked out in such terms is more than likely to be spurious. A comparative study, as far as it is possible at all, might, however, start from the assumption that, in different social matrices, there are specialized attitudes having functional elements in common, such as might be called religious. It would seem, then, that some criterion of the religions might be formulated in terms of social psychology, which would at least serve as a working hypothesis.

But as far as the evolution of this religious tendency is concerned, it is clear, at least as far as primitive religions are concerned, that we do not have some constant element to deal with, an element which gradually becomes more and more explicit. We have rather an indefinite number of discrete attitudes which, within limits, bear a definite relation to the matrix of experience out of which they have evolved.

[1] We say this advisedly, for, of course, the West Africans have customs in plenty, but we believe our statement is still true, comparatively speaking, if these peoples are taken in connection with such as those of Central Australia.

These are alike and yet different. They are alike in respect to their religious character, which certain conditions, in various stages of society, have caused to develop. All of the results of these conditions may be called *forms* of religious consciousness because of their peculiar relation to the matrix of practical activities.[1] On the other hand, they are different in so far as they have sprung from different grades of culture or from different sets of activities on the same grade of culture. In other words, from a given stage of culture a corresponding religious attitude may be differentiated, the immediate precursors of which attitude are the more direct and, in the main, the more practical attitudes of the life of the group. Almost any conceivable practical adjustment may theoretically, and has, in fact, as a matter of history, served as the basis of a religious attitude. It is manifest, if the religious attitude is thus a secondary matter, or a product, and if these are the conditions of its appearance, that religious types are not related to one another in causal or sequential terms, but rather in this, that they are all alike connected with certain cultural levels.

The problem of the evolution of religion is, then, the problem of tracing the connection between various religions and the cultural matrix out of which they have sprung, of noting how, in certain environments, and in the face of certain life-problems, the religious type of attitude tends to develop in particular ways, and how, in like manner, its content and form vary with these external conditions. The point is not that a pre-existing religious instinct finds expression in the important practical activities of a group of people, but rather that these activities by their *very importance* produce a peculiar differentiation of consciousness that may be called religious, and hence, in so far, themselves become religious acts. Thus,

[1] Cf. p. 126, *supra*.

"Worship of ancestors naturally predominates where family feeling is the strongest, and where the head of the family holds the position of authority over a large number of dependants." [1] In the case of negroes described by Ellis,[2] there is little family solidarity or family feeling, and consequently there is no development of the religious attitude on this side of their life. The chief matters of concern are the forces of nature manifested in ocean and river, in the falling of great trees, and in the pestilence. Certain adjusting activities cluster about these objects of attention, and out of them a religious attitude eventually grows.

The religion of the primitive Semites has been shown [3] to be directly connected with their dependence upon the date palm for food and with their matriarchal organization of society. The central object of attention of the Head-hunting Dyaks is, of course, the capture of enemies' heads, with its accompanying perils. The religious attitude of the Kwakiutl Indians is definitely connected with their complex system of secret societies. That of the Central Australians is evidently an outgrowth of their somewhat strenuous food conditions. In all the cases just mentioned, and many more might as easily be offered, we find a somewhat definite type of social interest about which most of the activities of the group centre. These activities may be called either practical or religious, with almost equal justice from the standpoint of the people involved.

The point which we have desired to make clear is that certain elements in the life of a people come to consciousness as having peculiar value, and therefore that the religious attitude, a special case of this larger sense of value, is directly related to,

[1] Morris, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 24, p. 411.
[2] *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast.*
[3] G. A. Barton, *Semitic Origins.*

and is an integral part of, the practical and spontaneous adjustments of the people concerned. If this is the correct view, there is no such thing as a permanently existing religious instinct, sense, or attitude, which continues independently of these objective conditions of life.

We may say, if we choose, that the human species is so organized that it has the faculty of realizing value; but nothing is gained by such a statement, any more than general psychology would profit by the dictum that man has a faculty of perception or of reason. Man does not perceive all of the time or reason all of the time, but if placed in certain situations he does act in these characteristic ways. There has been no continuum of reason or perception, but merely various discrete acts related definitely to the objective conditions in which he is from time to time placed. We hold that the case is the same with religion. One has here to deal with peculiar kinds of reactions which appear with reference to all varieties of objective circumstances, provided the latter have acquired a certain sort of relationship to a social group of some sort.

We should expect, then, to find that religious forms do not develop into other forms, but rather that they are the successive expressions of various ages and changing environments.[1] Thus, we venture to assert, the piacular sacrifice of the later Semitic religions can be said, only in an external sense, to have developed from the earlier sacrificial meal. These two types of religious expression were responses to two different types of needs, or conceptions of value. It is true that the objective form of the reaction was in all probability continuous throughout all periods of Semitic history; in other words, that the sacrificial meal gradually changed into certain later forms; but there was no continuity on the psychical side. The objective continuity was simply the vague one of habit or cus-

[1] Höffding, *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 242.

tom. As Semitic society met new problems and exigencies of life, the expression of the religious attitude, when it appeared at all, naturally fell into the conventional forms, modifying them gradually, however. It is so of all religious development. The external form of expression may serve to keep alive, or to reëxcite, a primitive attitude, but more likely the attitude itself is different because it has arisen out of new circumstances, and, in the end, the traditional form of expression is itself gradually transformed. The only continuity, then, in religious evolution is, we hold, the continuity of the social background, which, under varying conditions, produces varying types of religious growth.

In speaking, then, of different stages of the religious consciousness, we cannot mean that a certain attitude has been continuously unfolding in the history of the race, but rather that, here and there, are to be found divers types of development which may, on the whole, be classed as religious. No religion is related to another except on the general ground that all are expressions of what man feels to be ultimate values, the expression of the most far-reaching appreciations of life and its problems which he is capable of feeling upon his stage of culture and with his environment. Consequently the forms of religion are as diverse as the infinitely varied circumstances of human life and struggle can make them.

The foregoing discussion, not merely in this but also in all the preceding chapters, has been concerned with relatively primitive phases of religion. It is in types of this sort, particularly, that the statements made regarding the discreteness of religious phenomena are especially applicable. Here also is to be found that lack of relation between the religious consciousness of one age and that of another. These statements must, however, be gradually modified as one has to deal with successively better or more elaborately developed religions. The

primary reason for this is that all those psychical attitudes in which human nature may be organized tend to acquire a certain individuality and momentum which renders it possible for them to develop to some extent upon their own account. This has certainly been true of all the great historical religions, such as Buddhism, Judaism, Mahometanism, and Christianity. To illustrate and develop this point we may derive real assistance from certain aspects of biological evolution.

In the plant and animal world it seems to be true that the different forms, or types, acquire certain peculiar 'directions of movement,' together with a momentum which, within limits, carries them along a course of their own. Variations do not seem to occur altogether at random, but in certain *directions* peculiar to the species itself and conditioned apparently by its previous variations. Thus two different plant or animal forms in the same environment are affected by, or select and react to, quite different aspects of that environment. The life history of a given species seems to render it susceptible to one type of influence and irresponsive to another, or it may be better to say that each form responds to a stimulus in a manner peculiarly its own, and that this is increasingly true as the type develops. From generation to generation the momentum in some particular direction increases, and a correspondingly unique individuality is gradually built up. In any evolutionary process it is necessary to take into account not only the physical environment but also the form itself as a determining factor.

What is true of plant and animal life is apparently true of different varieties of social evolution. A social group also gradually acquires a certain individuality, and all the changes in the various phases of its life are largely determined by this individuality.[1] Its ideals, its concepts, its valuations, are all

[1] Cf. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, Vol. I, p. 63 (1st ed.).

cast in the peculiar mould which its previous development has provided. These tendencies apply to religion as well as to other social processes. Each religious type gradually constructs from the raw material furnished by the physical and social environment a mechanism capable of utilizing this environment in specific ways. But the universe offers indefinite possibilities to an evolving biological form. None can so develop as to embrace all these possibilities. Some are inevitably utilized to the neglect of others. In the same way the value-consciousness may be conceived as developing with an accelerated momentum along diverse lines on account of the indefinite possibilities for valuation afforded by man's universe. All specific valuations must appear more or less one-sided to an individual looking at them from a point of view outside the process which has produced them, and yet they may be legitimate constructs, since no valuation can include the entire order of existence. But, just as some animal forms have constructed types of life which prove in various ways to be superior to other forms which have had relatively the same natural environment, so it is possible that the evolution of values has been more successful in some directions than in others. The Todas, with their 'dairy religion,' the Australians, with their peculiar religio-magical rites, the Melanesians, with their customs largely adjusted so that they may obtain and utilize the mysterious force, *mana*, — all afford interesting illustration of the momentum which particular types of valuation may acquire in one or another direction. A striking case is presented by some of the North American Indians whose burial ceremonies required the destruction of a certain amount of personal property. These customs gradually increased to such an extent that the tribes in question were rapidly approaching a condition of abject poverty when the 'whites' interposed and checked the development of the ruinous

practices, which seem to have gotten entirely beyond the control of the Indians.[1] All these cases represent diverse methods of reacting to and of expressing certain appreciations of worth which, when once differentiated, acquire a force of their own which carries each forward almost irresistibly in its own peculiar direction. In this same way a particular type of religious consciousness was gradually developed by the later Hebrews, of which certain aspects have continued to unfold in connection with Christianity. In this way arises a sort of continuum of religious valuations and concepts which has some of the attributes of an independent existence capable, from one generation to another, of casting men's ideas into a particular mould and of organizing within them fairly constant types of valuational attitudes.

Thus there are diverse strains of religious as well as of general social evolution. Each of them has its peculiar merit (or demerit, some might say), because each is the expression of a particular outlook upon life, and no such single outlook can, as we have already said, be entirely inclusive of all the possibilities afforded by the universe. Some of these strains of religious development seem to have more momentum, and to be more inclusive than others, but in every case there is the particular 'direction of movement' which each has acquired and which is always more or less organic with the social life of the people concerned.

There are two points regarding the evolution of such a religious strain which should be kept in mind. The first, the *method* of its transmission from one generation to another; the second, the *means* of its further elaboration, or development. To the *method* of transmission we have already made reference.[2] It is in a large measure dependent

[1] I regret that I am at present unable to give the exact authority for this illustration.

[2] Chap. II, p. 37, *supra*.

upon the maintenance of certain objective conditions which stimulate in each new generation particular types of organized activity, and thus serve to keep alive fairly constant types of mental states. To be sure, in connection with this handing down of certain customs there is also a more or less definite transmission of a conceptual framework which depends for its meaning, in part, upon the underpinning of custom and ceremonial. The appearance of any given variety of the religious attitude in the individuals of succeeding generations is, then, accomplished largely by the method of social suggestion in all the manifold ways in which that may work.

As regards the *means* of elaboration, some account must always be taken of the development of the individual with a relatively separate and valid personality of his own. It has been shown that the primitive religious attitude is more or less objective, due to the fact that society, in its earlier stages, is organized so exclusively with reference to acute objective interests. Here the individual is not clearly differentiated from the group.[1] As a separate personality he has no validity; his religious interests, feelings, and concepts he shares with the rest of his tribe; purely personal desires and appreciations of worthfulness he can scarcely have, or, if he does have them, they are unstable and transient because they can find no place in the organized religion of his social *milieu*. As this subject comes up later in another connection,[2] we do not wish to go into details here. It is sufficient to say that with the development of the individual there is a corresponding development, both in intension and extension, of the religious attitude. Wherever the *person* acquires a status as an individual, in addition to his overt social relationships, it is, of course, inevitable that his various religious concepts and valuations, which before had significance only for group activity, will

[1] Cf. *supra*, pp. 66 f.

[2] *Infra*, pp. 330–333.

gain many new meanings. Out of the heightened sense of individuality will come new needs and new appreciations of worth. The relationship to the gods will become more and more personal. In countless ways his religious attitude will differentiate to correspond with his larger and more complex personality. The type of religion which thus evolves will not be radically different from the earlier group religion. It will be simply a highly specialized form of it in which the individual as such may find satisfaction for personal needs as he finds further opportunity for the exercise of his personality in the objective social life. The development of individuality enables the concepts and values built up so slowly and painfully in primitive society to unfold with more plasticity and with a certain independence of objective conditions.

The considerations we have above set forth are, we believe, fundamental to the proper understanding of the evolution of religion.

CHAPTER IX

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTS OF DIVINE PERSONAGES

I

We here propose to give a schematic account of the possible origin and development of the deistic 'concepts' [1] of religion. In this connection we shall also consider the various beliefs in spiritual beings, in so far as they seem to play a part in the religious consciousness. The literature which deals with this subject is already so overwhelming and so intricate that it seems almost gratuitous to attempt to add anything worth while to it, at least within the limits of a brief essay. There are, however, certain facts, perhaps in themselves already well known, that may be brought together in such a way as to give something of a new perspective to a problem which appears hopelessly complicated and illusive.

We wish, above all, to emphasize certain relationships between a people and its deities; to show, not merely how man's economic and social interests, together with the activities growing out of them, may be correlated with much, if not all, the varied material belonging to this field, but also to indicate how intimate and fundamental these economic and social facts are in the origin and development of deistic ideas.

It is, of course, generally recognized that deities of all

[1] The term 'concept' is used advisedly for want of a better word. It must not, therefore, be construed too literally. So in many other places in this chapter.

types are closely related to the cultural level of their human adherents, or, as is sometimes said, that they are the direct reflection of the people's social and political ideals.[1] In the inquiry here proposed, however, it will be shown that this relationship is more than a mere reflection, that the idea of a god with all the conscious attitudes which may attend it is but part and parcel of this larger social background, an almost inevitable, or at least legitimate, product of that background. In general terms, the proposition is that if people do certain things in certain ways, quite definite types of conscious attitudes may, on the whole, be expected, attitudes representing, as it were, the elaboration, on the conscious side, of these overt forms of behavior.

In the preceding chapters it has been pointed out that the religious consciousness is of the valuational type, and that it has, at least in part, been built up through the various adjustments which men have been led to make in dealing with their physical and social environment. The considerations in favor of this theory have been somewhat as follows: One's conception of the value of a thing is altogether dependent upon the extent to which he has identified himself with it, worked with it, and met various problems arising out of this active association. It has been shown, further, that religious values are so intimately associated with social structure and activity that they may fairly be regarded as owing their distinctive features to social influences of one sort or another. The best evidence that the valuational attitudes of religion are but specializations from a broad matrix of social interests is to be found in the fact that religious ceremonials of all sorts seem, fundamentally, to be merely forms of economic activity, or other social reactions of various sorts, playful and serious. Such ceremonials were evidently not devised to give expression to a

[1] *Vide* G. A. Barton, *Semitic Origins*, p. 82, *et seq.*

preëxisting religious sense, but were rather the basis upon which that sense developed, and this underpinning of reactions, let it be noted, was such as appeared quite naturally in the course of the life-process.

Just as our ordinary concepts, our ideational constructions of all sorts, go back finally to our active attitude toward the world, and are to be viewed as specializations of this attitude, so do all the 'concepts' and values of the religious consciousness have a natural history. The scientific examination of these religious 'concepts' cannot start from the hypothesis that they have, in some undefined way, sprung up outside the pale of the life-process, merely receiving a coloring from it or being modelled more or less upon the analogy of some form of institutional life. We must see in these 'concepts' rather the explicit outcome of antecedent conditions, phenomena organically related to other manifestations of social life. This natural history of religion has, from many points of view, a general scientific interest because, notwithstanding the great and almost unresolvable complexity of primitive religion, the material with which one here has to deal retains in a peculiar way the coloring of its ultimate social and economic relationships. Much light is thus thrown upon the general problems of the development of human intelligence and the method of social differentiation.

Our general thesis is, then, that social bodies may quite naturally differentiate deities of various types; or, negatively, that deities are not relatively independent affairs merely colored by, or seen through, social customs and social ideals. In each deity we may find some expression of the value-sense of a people rather than an indication of a more or less imperfect consciousness of some supreme being such as the higher forms of monotheism present. Since the gods of a people are thus explicitly related to its social life, it follows that the

deistic conceptions of different times and races are, in the main, quite discrete and unrelated to each other except in the fact that they are all varying modes of social reaction and social determination. The only unity that can be given the various concepts of different primitive religions is that of their common relation to social backgrounds of some sort.[1]

But, although we may not, at least from a scientific point of view, trace a gradual unfolding of some innate concept of a divine or ethical ruler of the universe, we may roughly group different points of view with reference to their ideal relation to some of the types of ethical monotheism. We may find in various primitive ideas, not necessary stages toward the development of the so-called higher deistic conceptions, but rather more or less complicated results of different types of social and economic interaction, which, to say the least, throw some light upon the influences operative in the evolution of the higher conceptions, and help us to see that these purer ideas really have had a natural history, even though it may not be possible to trace it out in all its details.

II

The main problem that confronts us is that of discovering why the 'concepts' of value, to which we have referred above, should ever have tended to find expression in terms of superior personalities.

It will be convenient to open the question by an examination of the difference that is sometimes drawn between religion and magic, namely, that they differ in the main on the question of deities. Magic, it is said, stands for a mechanical conception of the universe, and, when it postulates spirit agencies it regards them as objects for manipulation and coercion

[1] *Vide* pp. 208, 213, *supra*.

rather than as superior beings to be worshipped. Religion, on the other hand, is usually said to be distinguished by its view of the world as governed by personal forces, which are often capricious, and whose favor is to be won by some sort of bargaining, flattery, adulation, or worship. That there is an important point involved in the above distinction is not to be denied, but it demands close examination, for, stated in this broad way, the fundamental difference upon which it is based is not clearly apparent.

While deities are usually associated with religion, they are only *one* of the means through which the religious consciousness may find expression, and it is to that attitude itself one must turn if one is to gain a really adequate notion of the difference between the two. This religious attitude is, as we have pointed out, one in which appreciative and valuational elements predominate, particularly such as are determined by social intercourse and by a social atmosphere generally. If religion is the distinctive product of such conditions, it is not strange that the conceptions of worth, the valuational attitudes thus socially determined, should be associated in some way with persons. In other words, social values could scarcely be perpetuated except in some sort of social terms. This is a general statement of the ground upon which we shall try to account for the appearance and the development of relatively idealized personages in many religions.

The theory of Frazer[1] that gods were invented or resorted to when magical expedients were found, in the course of the ages, to be futile, is to be criticised on the ground that the gods do not represent expedients, alternate with magic, for dealing with the universe. The gods were hardly resorted to because magic had failed, for in the minds of the natural

[1] *Vide The Golden Bough*, 2d edition, Vol. I, p. 129, Vol. III, p. 458, *et al.*

peoples of to-day magic is as much of a success as it ever was. The gods are rather representative of the fact that certain values tend to be conceived in social terms, and man's reactions toward the universe tend, in part at least, to be extensions of the reactions developed through social intercourse. The worship of the gods has, then, nothing to do with the supposed failure or success of magical practices as such, but is altogether a consequence of the fact that religious values are primarily social in origin and in development. The position we have here taken differs to some extent from that ordinarily accepted. Many writers have shown how magical practices and theories underlie most religions and are interwoven with many of the most highly developed types. To some extent the whole matter depends upon what one chooses to call magic and religion, but it is also true that one's definitions in any field may clarify or obscure important phases of the subject-matter under consideration. It seems to the present writer that the great difficulty with the prevalent point of view is that it separates so radically two related phases of primitive thought and practice. On the one side is the savage's general mechanical conception of the world, and on the other is his idea of it as pervaded by spirits or *a* spirit which is to be worshipped in some way or other. In actual life we find these 'concepts' interacting in most unexpected ways. That there is an important and genuine relationship present may, we believe, be demonstrated, and it will, therefore, add clarity to the exposition to reserve the term 'magic' for a particular type of attitude toward the world, rather than to apply it indiscriminately to all practices in which the world is conceived as pervaded by forces which may in various ways yield to manipulation.

Proceeding with our inquiry, then, we shall try at the outset to take a somewhat plastic point of view, seeking simply to

note the probable method by which the valuational attitudes of a group have often come to be associated with persons, and, further, the way in which the interests and activities of such a group determine not only the fundamental nature of these superior persons but determine as well the various attributes with which they become endowed. At one end of the process of development we find definite gods; at the other, various socialized conceptions that appear to have furnished the matrix from which the gods have evolved. Just when a real deity may be said to emerge from this matrix may not always be easy to determine, nor will it be of great consequence to be able to answer such a question definitely, for that would necessitate the setting up of more or less arbitrary standards. The process of the socialization of values is really the fundamental problem, and when that is solved, it will clear up many questions which may be raised regarding the deities themselves.

It is important to bear in mind that the values with which we are concerned may arise out of any situation which engages the attention of the social group. Many theories regarding primitive deities are inadequate because they overemphasize some one interest, and thereby do not give sufficient credit to the rôle of the whole social body in the development of such ideas. Such theories give an adequate account neither of the interest upon which everything is based, nor of the diversity of characteristics which the concept of a deity inevitably acquires. Thus, some well-known writers have held that the worship of the gods has all been developed from the primitive man's respect and fear of the dead, especially of his ancestors. Others have maintained that man has a 'general tendency' to conceive all the forces of nature in terms of spiritual agencies, and that these spirits are in greater or less degree his deities, or, at least, that his deities are direct developments of his

animism. Others have held there is some sort of an original instinct to revere things in general, and that this instinct has, in various ways, become particularized so that, beginning with a general or vague worship of all inanimate objects, it has progressed through certain fairly definite types of particularization, *e.g.* worship of stones, snakes, trees, the generative principle, great natural forces, up to the ethical conceptions of highly developed religions.

These theories explain little that is important, and the classifications offered are usually based upon altogether superficial characteristics, such at least as leave out of account the meaning or attitude expressed, and certainly give no place for the social factor, whether it be in the origin of the god or in the development of his attributes. There is no question, of course, but that such objects as those mentioned above have served in many religions as deities or as the symbols of deities, but none of those who find religion beginning in the worship of these things seem to have thought of showing why man should have been concerned in the first place to worship something.

To deal with this problem from the psychological point of view requires that we explain, in the first place, why certain objects, phenomena, or supposed spirits have attracted and held the attention of men. The answer, of course, is that they have been, primarily, such things as have engaged his activities in the elementary food, protective, and reproductive processes; for example, fruitful plants and trees, wild animals, storms, rivers, mountains, and so forth, especially such objects as have concerned men in groups. Reference has already been made to the large extent to which animals have excited primitive man's attention. The erratic behavior of the hawk, rushing down from the sky, screaming and circling about and before their boats, causes some of the tribes of Borneo to

regard it with respect and to consult it for omens.[1] The same authors tell us that one native thinks a certain python has helped him, so that neither he nor his children kill that animal. Another family is protected by the porcupine because one ran out of a hole when their house was building, and some one dreamed of the incident that night. None of the family have died in the seven years since, nor have they killed any porcupines, except upon one occasion when one was sacrificed and prayed to. Another household was protected by a gibbon, which was therefore never killed by this family.

The Borneans also recognize other omen birds, which are often birds with strange or peculiar cries, such as the woodpecker and hornbill. The dog is never killed, neither will they kill and eat deer or wild cattle. The cries of deer are to them warnings of danger. A sort of tiger occurring in Borneo is also greatly respected, and no ordinary man dares touch the skin of one. These same people do not kill lizards nor snakes, and are afraid of a long-nosed variety of monkey, being unwilling to look one of them in the face or to laugh at him. This regard for animals, of course, has various connections with their other beliefs. Similar illustrations could be given from practically all primitive peoples. As we do not care here to go beyond the fact that *various animals may easily and in quite explainable ways arouse a sort of spontaneous attention in people*, these cases may suffice. As with animals, so with inanimate objects and various forms of vegetation. We offer a few illustrations, simply. Thus, the date palm was an object of great interest to some of the primitive Semitic peoples,[2] and among the tribes of the Niger delta there is much respect for certain trees and shrubs, some of which

[1] Hose and MacDougall, "Men and animals in Sarawak," *Journal of Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXI.

[2] *Vide* Barton, *Semitic Origins.*

are worshipped. In one section a creeper "which grows in the bush and is considered by the natives to bear a striking resemblance to the python, the living emblem of their national god, is worshipped by the natives, and a severe punishment is inflicted on any one who cuts it down and burns it. . . . So, too, the African oak is considered sacred, and as such is used for building purposes only." The blood-plum, a common tree, is believed to have certain peculiar powers and is generally worshipped. The Yoruba believe that a slender, prickly plant, which grows in the bush, escapes being burnt in forest fires because of its indwelling spirit. A large tree, called the 'Father of trees,' is regarded with much reverence, attention being attracted to it especially because "it never grows in a grove, but always in a position that commands a stream." From the hard wood of another tree called *ayan*, the club of the god of thunder is made. "They have a proverb to the effect that 'Ayan resists an axe.'" [1]

[1] Leonard, *The Lower Niger and its Tribes*, pp. 301–303. With reference to these observations of Major Leonard's it should be noted that he maintains very emphatically that these Niger tribes revere these things because they suppose them to be the dwelling-places of ancestral spirits, the whole cult being of this type. Great weight should be given to his interpretation because of his long and intimate acquaintance with the natives, but it is significant to note that Captain Ellis is equally emphatic in asserting that the Yoruba, closely related to the tribes observed by Leonard, are not ancestor-worshippers. Whatever the truth of the matter may be, there can be no doubt that it is some physical peculiarity of tree, shrub, or animal, a peculiarity of some practical significance, possibly, which has thrust it upon their attention and thus made it an appropriate dwelling for the ancestral spirit. As a matter of fact, there is much in Leonard's account to lead one to suspect that there is here at least an underpinning of spiritistic belief that is not strictly ancestral. It seems entirely possible that the idea of ancestral spirits might become so absorbing that *all* spirit beliefs would eventually be interpreted according to the ancestral pattern. This has surely occurred in such a case as this; viz. the belief in a spirit land to which the spirits of the plants go when they die. Miss Kingsley, *West African Studies*, p. 131, takes the same view as does Ellis; viz. that ancestor-worship is not the basis of West African religion.

Just as the Niger native reveres certain plants, so he also holds in great reverence reptiles, particularly crocodiles, iguanas, and, among the coast tribes, the shark. The animals which are thus respected are the ones which are the most in evidence, and which impress him with their strength, craft, or subtlety.[1] Here, again, Leonard thinks the veneration is due to the fact that they are the emblems of more or less powerful ancestral spirits. Though this be now the case, we can scarcely doubt that the animal itself was, to start with, quite able to attract the attention and arouse the fear of the native.[2]

Stones in the alluvial deposit of the Niger delta are quite rare. In one place, an egg-shaped slab of granite is the only stone known to the natives, and they highly revere it. "How it, the only stone in the vicinity, got there, or where it came from, is a blank and a mystery which renders it all the more sacred." [3]

The interest of the primitive man in natural objects, plants, and animals is universal, and it is scarcely necessary to multiply illustrations.[4] We wish, by these which we have given and which are, by the way, quite typical, to show in what natural ways various things may become objects of general

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 317.

[2] Some of the tribes of Borneo, whose animal beliefs were referred to above, also tend to associate ancestral spirits with some animals. In one case the deer are so looked upon, probably because they are in the habit of frequenting the grassy clearings made by the people about their places of burial. *Vide* Hose and MacDougall, *op. cit.* This case is especially worthy of note because it illustrates how easily the ancestor may come to be associated with a particular animal. In the same way the Kafirs think the snakes which creep about their burial places are the spirits of their forefathers. Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, p. 87.

[3] Leonard, p. 306.

[4] Nassau, *Fetichism in West Africa*, gives many excellent illustrations. All sorts of prominent natural objects are regarded with respect and fear. Thus caves, large rocks, large or hollow trees, dark forests, dangerous rocks in rivers, the natives approach or pass with a muttered prayer.

interest and represent actual or symbolic values to the mind of the savage. In some of the instances mentioned there is no suggestion of a deity; in others the interest seems to pass easily into respect or fear, while in still others the object is believed to be the abode of a spirit which not only commands respect, but also is approached with definite ceremonials of worship. We can scarcely doubt that it is possible to trace a natural transition from simple objects of attention to objects of real religious adoration.

The point thus far is that the objects with which spirits and ancestors are almost universally associated are in many cases *originally* interesting, and furnish the first foci for those valuational attitudes such as later found expression in terms of some person or spirit. It is quite possible that, as the notion of spirit agencies developed, the value of these material objects or animals would be explained as due to an indwelling spirit or ancestor, as seems to be the case of the Niger tribes, or to the peculiar way in which the object was in touch with or was the vehicle of 'the mysterious potency,' as among various of the North American Indians.

In the same way in which certain things become objects of fear or regard, persons would attract attention and be feared or even revered, and this regard would be carried over to their ghosts as soon as the notion of a detachable spirit part was developed, and finally, as Leonard says, just as the savage trusts some men and fears others, so he trusts and fears spirits.

III

As we have seen, these first objects of interest, whether inanimate things, plants, animals, or persons, are in most cases such as lie very close at hand, arouse man's curiosity, and frequently have to do with his welfare in intimate ways. It

should be noted also that these centres of interest depend quite definitely upon the activities and economic concerns of social groups rather than upon the whim of the individual. It is this which gives the interest intensity and stability. These facts furnish a useful background from which to examine a certain phase of the conception of deities, which may profitably be disposed of as the next step in our inquiry; namely, the belief, present among almost all ethnic peoples, in far-off and quite unreal divinities, along with others which seem quite near at hand, concrete, vital, and closely related to present activities and interests. These far-off gods are often so lacking in qualities of any sort that investigators have held that they are really remnants of higher conceptions of the divine, contrasting strangely with the sordid objects of faith prevailing in the present. Thus Nassau reports that the negroes of the West Coast have the idea of an all-father, a sort of culture-hero who is so remote that he takes no interest in their present doings and is consequently given no worship.[1] The Kafirs are said to have a hazy belief in a far-off god, Umulunkulu, a creator, but the concept is not sharply distinguished from that of great-great-grandfather. Their religious devotions are much more readily excited by their immediate ancestors and by the snakes which creep about their graves. Their Amatongo are the spirits of their immediate ancestors, and these they praise and attempt to please by killing oxen for them.[2] Among the Yoruba people and others adjoining them there are also beliefs in distant gods, as of the sky, who are seldom worshipped, while local deities, natural objects, or phenomena which excite fear or attention, are highly respected.[3] The Niger tribes manifest a reverence for the

[1] *Fetichism in West Africa*, pp. 36 ff.
[2] Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*.
[3] Ellis, *The Tshi-, Ewe-, and Yoruba-speaking Peoples*.

phenomena of nature, regarding, however, the most distant ones, as the sky, sun, moon, and stars, with the least interest.[1] Illustrations of this sort might be multiplied indefinitely, even in some of the higher religions. Thus it is said that the Hindu's belief in Brahma as creator is analogous to his belief in the existence of America.[2]

The significant point in all these cases is that the remote deity stands in no definite relation to current interests. Instead, however, of regarding it as a remnant of a higher belief, we should hold rather that it is a stranded deity, the remnant of a time when the interests of the group were other than at present. The remoteness and lack of definite qualities is not to be taken as proving the superior character of these gods. It is easy for one who looks for remnants of a higher belief to lead his informants to make statements which he can interpret as he chooses. The negro, knowing of nothing in particular to say about the superseded gods, by his very lack of definiteness or by the general statements into which he is led, when pressed to say *something*, can easily be taken to have in these vague ideas the vestiges of a belief in a supreme being.

What seems to be an excellent illustration of the position here taken is furnished by the Todas. These peoples have a fairly extensive pantheon, but its members are not at present objects of worship in any important degree. The Todas give attention to them only in so far as they are able to connect them with their most important and economic and social interest, their buffaloes. All the myths about their gods are otherwise hazy, and their names persist in a meaningless way in the Todas' prayers. As we have stated already, all the keen religious interests of these people are absorbed in the various

[1] Leonard, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

[2] E. W. Hopkins, *Journal of American Oriental Society*, Vol. 25.

ceremonies of the dairy.[1] It is certainly significant that these deities are to-day remembered chiefly for what they are supposed once to have done in connection with the dairies, although there are fragments extant of an unmistakably different belief, which doubtless points to a time when the interests and activities were other than they are to-day. Some of their gods are possibly heroes, men who, formerly, actually took part in the economic activities of the tribe, while others clearly belong to a different era, and their legends "are gradually becoming vaguer in the progress toward complete obliviscence."[2] We find among these people "a stage of religious belief in which the gods, once believed to be real, living among men and intervening in their affairs, have become shadowy beings, apparently less real, and intervening in the affairs of men in a mysterious manner and chiefly in the case of infraction of laws which they are still believed to have given."[3]

Some of these apparently colorless and far-off gods may, to be sure, be due in part to the play of fancy, which might easily construct purely play-deities upon the analogy of the more immediately interesting ones. While this may in some measure explain certain cases, we feel sure that the general hypothesis offered above accounts for by far the most of them.

Wherever deities of much definiteness and color are found, they are always associated with various acute and quite persistent interests of their adherents. The negroes of the Gold and the Slave coasts have beliefs in varying degrees in indwelling spirits. These, as we have seen, are connected with such definite concerns as tall trees, rivers, lakes, portions of the sea where lives are known to have been lost, disease, and particularly small-pox. Among agricultural peoples we find

[1] Rivers, *The Todas*, Chaps. IX, XIX.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 252.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 452.

deifications of fertility, such as Ishtar and Adonis, among Semitic peoples, and Osiris, in the case of the Egyptians. Of the same ilk are the numerous deifications of the sun. The deity of the primitive Semites was a mother goddess associated with the date palm. On the other hand, warlike races have gods of war. The Head-hunters of Sarawak not only have such a deity, but hold in veneration the captured heads, regarding them as receptacles of power and good fortune. But here, again, there is no need to multiply examples. We wish simply to illustrate the point that gods which hold a prominent place in the minds of a people are always related to some aspect of their social interests and that, when these interests change, if the gods are too fixed to change also, they readily become remote, shadowy, and unreal, and are known only by name rather than through a ritual of any kind.

New interests furnish the basis for new deities. If the old gods are retained, it is almost always through their becoming associated in some way with the new concerns of life. This fact is illustrated in a curiously complicated way, as we have seen, by the Todas. With them, new deities are just in the process of appearing. Milk is for them an intrinsically sacred fluid, and the bells have become objects of sacrifice, apparently through association with the milk. The dairy utensils and the dairy itself are all, likewise, sacred objects.

IV

Frequent reference has been made to the diversity of the interests of the primitive man which furnish the basis for his religious ideas. The development of these interests, together with the activities with which they are necessarily associated, and which, in part, have produced them, are easily explainable, as we have seen. Thus far we have desired to

show how a more or less intense mental attitude of attention or interest may, in certain situations, be quite naturally aroused. This attitude of interested attention is, in most cases, as we have seen, associated in the mind of the savage with various theories of impersonal powers or of spirits. In this section we wish to take up the fact of this association and determine, if possible, its significance.

In a preceding chapter ("The Mysterious Power") it was seen that the concept of a power of some sort, personal or impersonal, may naturally arise from a situation involving strained attention or interest. First the object itself is regarded with interest, then gradually the notion grows that *some* things, such as dangerous or fleet-footed animals, swift rivers, have a 'power' which requires of men special attention, circumspect action. There seems no reason why this vague notion of a force, or potency, should not be gradually extended as a sort of semiconscious 'concept' to interpret all phenomena and things which arouse attention, and that it should account also for the well-realized values of the things of concern in daily life. The man, also, whom the savage fears, is in the same way regarded as 'possessed' of some madness or 'power.' We may, with Frazer, call such a person a man-god [1] if we wish, or, more simply, regard him as merely the sort of a case which helps to generate in the savage mind the semiconscious theory of a 'power' to which may be attributed all the peculiarities of his environment.

This notion that there is a 'power' in the interesting object is further strengthened by seeming instances of the transmission of the energy from one person or thing to another. The savage is familiar with cases where one body acts upon another with striking results. "Some qualities or characteristics of things are, in a sense, transmissible. Death as

[1] *The Golden Bough*, 2d ed., Vol. I, pp. 130 f.

such is not infectious, but small-pox is. The touch of a pregnant woman will not impart her fertility, but her warm hand will impart warmth. But there is probably a little more in the matter than a too hasty generalization. There is the conception of a quality as something quasi-substantial." [1]

Association of one thing with another by contiguity may further strengthen the belief in the reality of a 'power' in nature, more or less separable from particular objects. Thus, when connections out of the ordinary are noted and are followed by striking events, the primitive mind is immediately suspicious of some hidden connection. Rivers reports that the family of the Toda from whom he obtained much of his information soon suffered a number of misfortunes, sickness, death, and fire, coincidences inevitably impressive to the savage mind.

As we have already pointed out, the so-called universal animism of primitive races is in large measure this feeling that there is in nature a vague potency of some sort which underlies most of its phenomena, as well as most of the things that men themselves accomplish. The fundamental theory of Shinto [2] is this theory of the universe as sentient, beneficent, or to be dreaded, as the case may be. The theory was not that of spiritism, but simply that the world was alive, possessed of power, no attempt being made to distinguish any spirit part as such. Thus the adherent of Shinto revered buildings, provinces, trees, heaven and earth, human rulers, birds, beasts, plants, seas, mountains, and all of them directly, not necessarily some spirit part of them. They were objects which in various ways attracted his attention, deserved to be dreaded for

[1] L. T. Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution*, Vol. II, p. 19. He also refers to the ceremonial of the scapegoat's carrying away the sins of the penitent into the desert as a remnant, in a higher religion, of this primitive belief.

[2] Aston, *Shinto*, pp. 16, 26.

the powers which they possessed. Such, Aston tells us, were the first Shinto deities. They were real objects of worship, and real religious rites were developed in their honor without any definite personality being attributed to them.[1] This he explains on the ground that the Japanese have such a feeble concept of personality.

We have in these cases and in those cited from the Todas what may, for convenience, be called an early stage in the development of the deity *per se;* that is, forms of worship clustering about various objects of interest, probably the direct outgrowth of the practical and playful adjustments which these objects of interest originally aroused. The object of interest is felt to possess a potency of some sort, but it is not as yet associated with or conceived in terms of personality. In this same category we should class the widely prevalent ceremonies with which the new moon is greeted, of which Frazer has collected many instances, and which he explains as "intended to renew and invigorate, by means of sympathetic magic, the life of man."[2] It seems to us much simpler to think of these ceremonies as originating in pure, spontaneous joyousness or sportiveness, similar to that described by Stow as appearing among the Bushmen on the advent of the new moon. As the idea of a 'power' developed, these sports and dances would naturally be associated with the moon and would be conceived as due to some invigorating influence of its mysterious crescence. In time, the serious phase of the matter might become more prominent and the sport and spontaneous joyous-

[1] Aston, *op. cit.*, p. 17. (See also Griffis, *The Religions of Japan*, New York, 1895.) In the Kojiki, the oldest of the Japanese sacred writings, "A Kami or deity is anything wonderful, god or man, rock, stream, or snake, whatever is surprising or sensational." There was no sharp dividing line between men and gods. The Kami were distinguished by such qualities as strength, brute force, not moral traits.

[2] *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, pp. 307 *et seq.*

ness would then be interpreted as the means by all odds most necessary through which to secure to man the peculiar 'strength' of the moon. These rites may be called magical, but to the present writer they are rudimentarily religious, *i.e.* social rites for obtaining 'power,' with no very definite conception of the moon as a personality.

V

We are now ready to take up the question of how the element of personality is added to the conceptions thus far discussed, forming the next, and possibly the most important step, in the development of the real deity. Many intermediate stages may be noted between the merely impersonal conception and that of the full-fledged deity. In general, the most important of them all is that in which the 'power' is associated with living beings. It would be natural to suppose that as soon as man conceived of an active force present in his world he would tend to associate persons and animals with it in an especial manner. Many of the monsters of Eskimo mythology seem to have been founded upon the experiences of those people with unfamiliar persons, either Indians or men of their own who have been lost, banished, or run away from the tribe. These, since they are seldom seen, and since they act strangely when seen, gradually acquire all sorts of mysterious and dreadful powers.[1] As has already been pointed out, primitive peoples attribute feats of all sorts, whether in men or animals, to the help of this 'power.' Animals which are swift or cunning or which escape their enemies in some other striking way, as in the case of the tortoise, would at once be said to possess it. These beliefs are common enough to-day, as we have seen. We have shown

[1] Nansen, *Eskimo Life.*

how the Melanesians associate their notion of this intangible force with persons who have given evidence of extraordinary ability in some direction or other. These people are particularly interesting because they represent such an elementary phase of the matter here considered. They do not go so far as to identify the person with the force, or to make it the expression of his personality. Thus, although certain persons have particular control over it, they are not regarded as deities. So also, when they are dead, their spirits are revered because of their fortuitous control of this *mana*, or 'power,' and various ceremonies are performed at their graves, not as forms of worship, but to induce them to continue to use their power favorably. Those spirits which seem disinclined to respond are promptly discarded and soon forgotten. The attention of the Melanesians is clearly occupied with the 'power' idea, but with it all they have come to have a definite regard for some persons, and have developed ceremonials which are suggestive of those of the true religious type, *i.e.* of those directed to personal deities.[1]

A most interesting illustration of how a person may come to be conceived as the possessor of a potency of some sort, and hence become an object of regard, is that of a Norwegian king, Halfdan the Black.[2] In his lifetime he had been most prosperous, *i.e.* blessed with abundance. On his death he was brought to a certain spot in his realm for burial, but "so greatly did men value him that when the news came that he was dead," chief men came from different parts of his kingdom, "and all requested that they might take his body with them and bury it in their various provinces; they thought that it would bring abundance to those who obtained it. Eventually

[1] On the general tendency to deal with 'power' in personal ways, cf. R. R. Marett, *Folklore*, Vol. XI, p. 172.

[2] Frazer, *Adonis*, etc., p. 271.

it was settled that the body was distributed in four places." Frazer points out that this king belonged to a family which traced its descent from Frey, the Scandinavian god of fertility. The fundamentally significant fact is, however, that being a man distinguished by a prosperous life, he must, therefore, possess some peculiar potency which might supposedly be secured permanently for that section of the country in which his body was buried. The valuation set upon this king was clearly due to the extraordinary qualities which he acquired, partly at least, by contiguous association with the years of his prosperous reign.

The above illustrations are of considerable importance in that they show how easily a primitive race may come to regard persons as especially endowed with a mystic potence. The basis of the connection in the last case is quite mechanical, but it is a step toward a genuine reverence for a person as over against mere circumspection or fear in the presence of an undefined, impersonal power.

The same tendency to fear or respect the person as the embodiment of a mysterious force may be induced in other ways. The sorcerer and miracle-monger, Frazer regards as the chrysalis out which of the gods developed. "'The real gods of Tana may be said to be the disease-makers. It is surprising how these men are dreaded, and how firm the belief that they have in their hands the power of life and death.' The means employed by these sorcerers to effect their fell purpose is sympathetic magic; they pick up the refuse of a man's food or other rubbish belonging to him, and burn it with certain formalities; and so the man falls ill and sends a present, an embryo sacrifice, to the sorcerer or embryo god, paying him to stop burning the rubbish, for he believes that when it is quite burnt he must surely die. Here we have all the elements of a religion — a god, a worshipper,

prayer, and sacrifice — in process of evolution. The same supernatural powers which tend to elevate a magician into a god tend also to raise him to the rank of a chief or a king."[1]

It is further possible that actual persons may become associated with abundant crops, giving rise to the idea of a mystic connection between the two. This is clearly illustrated in the legend related by Frazer of the above-mentioned Scandinavian god Frey.[2] He was the god of fertility, but was reputed to have been originally a king of Sweden at Upsala. "The years of his reign were plenteous, and the people laid the plenty to his account. So when he died they would not burn him, as it had been customary to do with the dead before his time; but they resolved to preserve his body, believing that, so long as it remained in Sweden, the land would have abundance and peace." Whether this legend has any basis in fact or not, it clearly illustrates a very natural method by which the dead may come to be revered, and, through the conception of a potency or mystic 'power,' be associated with some particular and prominent interest in the life of a people. Frazer cites a number of other legends of kings dismembered and buried in different places for the sake of disseminating their 'power.'[3]

The large place held by gods of fertility among the primitive Mediterranean peoples is well known. It seems not unreasonable to suppose that these may owe their origin in part to the association of peculiar powers with actual persons. Frazer points out that large statues of the gods of fertility were often placed in picturesque localities, suggestive of the manifestation of the 'power' of vegetation. Two cases are

[1] *The Golden Bough*, Vol. I, pp. 137, 138.
[2] *Adonis, Attis and Osiris*, p. 272.
[3] *Adonis*, etc., pp. 271 ff., also footnote 1, p. 271.

mentioned where a "noble river issues abruptly from the rock to spread fertility through the rich vale below. Nowhere could man more appropriately revere those great powers of nature to whose favor he ascribes the fruitfulness of the earth, and through it the life of animate creation. With its cool and bracing air, its mass of verdure, its magnificent stream of pure ice-cold water — so grateful in the burning heat of summer — and its wide stretch of fertile land, the valley may well have been the residence of an ancient prince or high-priest. . . . The place is a paradise of birds. . . . Yet a little way off, beyond the beneficent influence of the springs and streams, all is desolation, in summer an arid waste broken by great marshes and wide patches of salt, in winter a broad sheet of stagnate water, which, as it dries up with the growing heat of the sun, exhales a poisonous malaria. . . . No wonder the smiling luxuriance of the one landscape, sharply contrasting with the bleak sterility of the other, should have rendered it in the eyes of primitive man a veritable Garden of God."[1] As the author quoted suggests, we have here a typical natural situation in which primitive man would imagine a 'power' to be present. In different ways he might come to believe that this 'power' was the expression of a personal agent. Either an actual person might be the focus of attention, or, on the analogy of another situation in which a person actually seemed to display remarkable power, he would come to the conclusion that the 'power' manifested before him was to be accounted for in a similar manner. We know that the Semitic peoples worshipped many of their kings when they were alive, *e.g.* at Babylon, in Moab, and in Edom. Their names indicate that they were conceived as related to the real deities of the people. It is not, therefore, impossible, that in these cases we have actual reminiscences of times when men were supposed to have

[1] *Adonis*, etc., pp. 45, 46. Cf. similar descriptions, *ibid.*, pp. 15, 16, *et seq.*

superior 'power' through association with some aspect of the bounty of nature.[1]

It is possible that the 'rain-maker,' a familiar person among many primitive peoples, is an embryonic god of fertility. It is easy to see how the man who is supposed to be able to make rain would be revered in a peculiar way. Among the Niger tribes some of the kings are regarded as endowed with this power.[2]

Various animals may come to be regarded as deities in the same way as persons, for the animal, to the natural man, is really a person, often powerful and mysterious. Embryonic forms of worship may be noted in those cases where an animal is honored and complimented and sometimes even wept over before it is killed. The purpose of such performances is doubtless to forestall any attempt on the part of the animal to use its much-dreaded 'power' against its captor. Such acts are not worship, but they are typical of the kind of acts out of which worship grows. Reclus relates that certain of the Eskimo, before setting upon a stranded whale, receive it with divine honors, speeches, and compliments.[3] The Lillooet Indians act in a similar way when they are about to kill a bear.[4] The hunting of various animals among the Malays is preceded by all sorts of apologies and explanations to the victims.[5]

We thus see how the respect for animals, persons, and spirits is based upon the supposition that they are possessed of extraordinary powers. Frazer, in his various writings, has col-

[1] The significance of burning the 'king-god,' much dwelt upon by Frazer, does not concern us here. We may remark in passing that the killing of the god was supposed to set free the 'power' he possessed that it might be active in the restoration of vegetation.

[2] Leonard, *op. cit.*, p. 379.

[3] Quoted by Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution*, Vol. II, p. 13.

[4] James Teit, "The Lillooet Indians," *Memoirs American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. IV.

[5] Skeat, *Malay Magic*, gives many illustrations of these curious practices.

lected many illustrations of the so-called 'man-gods.' The whole series of curious beliefs and practices connected with these personages is of course the outcome of the idea that they have a 'power' of some sort which is sometimes so independent of their personal life that it may be best utilized by the destruction of that personal life itself. The ceremonies of killing the person in order to render his 'power' more generally available should not be classed as magical, but rather as quite of a kind with many of those associated with full-fledged deities.[1] The deity is not of necessity a being whose 'power' is a *part* of himself, the natural emanation of his personality, as is thought to be the case among those of more advanced religious development; at least a measure of the regard in which he is held may be the outcome of the belief that there resides in him a purely *impersonal* contagion. Much of the primitive Israelitish worship of Yahweh illustrates this.[2] No one who examines the accounts of primitive deities can avoid feeling

[1] "The immediate motive [of deification] is nothing but the vague inference from great natural gifts or from strange fortunes to supernatural visitation, or from power during life to power prolonged beyond it." (Sir Charles Lyall, *Asiatic Studies*, 1st series, p. 20.) This writer's discussion of the development of deities is most interesting, and is in many respects similar to the view of this chapter. For example, he says, p. 18, *ibid.*: "So far as I have been able to trace back the origin of the best-known minor provincial deities, they are usually men who have earned special promotion and brevet rank among disembodied ghosts by some peculiar acts or accident of their lives or deaths. . . . Popular deifications appear to have been founded, in their simplest form, on mere wonder and pity," etc. See also *ibid.*, pp. 37 f.

[2] This notion seems to be present in the story of Moses and the burning bush; in the various precautions which both the people and their leaders were commanded to exercise at the time of their encampment about Sinai. The whole region was surcharged, and the greatest care was imperative. So also in the case of Uzzah's putting forth his hand to steady the ark lest it topple over, and his being stricken down by the potency within, which was evidently quite mechanical, for the act of Uzzah must have been quite involuntary, or, if voluntary, it was surely actuated by an intent that could hardly be called in question.

that in one way or another the hypothesis of this magic and impersonal potence enters largely into all beliefs and practices connected with them. We have tried to point out how naturally this potence is associated with persons and animals, and have maintained that this association is one of the first steps in the evolution of a purely personal deity. There are, however, other important forces to be taken into account, and to these we now must turn.

VI

As we have seen, the primitive man easily tends to interpret his feelings of value in terms of a mysterious, vaguely conceived 'force'; but the values themselves are largely of social origin, and the social factor is continuously present, enhancing them and rendering them stable and permanent. Indeed it is largely through the presence of a social body of some sort that the individual acquires prominence of any kind, especially the reputation of being endowed with 'power' or wisdom.[1]

It would, of course, be strange if a primitive social group did not think of all that affected it in some sort of social terminology. Its customs, its arts, all the aspects of its culture, would almost inevitably be associated with the initiative, skill, or cunning, of some person or animal. To be convinced that this is the case, we need only note the large number of culture-hero legends in primitive mythology. The play of fancy would have much to do with extending and giving content to these concepts, and in proportion as these constructions of fancy were interwoven with the people's conception of its life and destiny would they acquire a religious value.[2]

[1] Cf. Chap. xii, *infra*.

[2] Cf. Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution*, Vol. II, p. 28, "Where the mythical being (*i.e.* culture-hero) comes into relation with the origin and life of nature or with the customs or destinies of man, he may be said to belong to religion."

The 'All-father' of the southeast Australians illustrates quite clearly the way in which a social group may build up such a concept, or perhaps we should say, shows how the tribe, with its fundamental economic and social interests, is the soil out of which the notion of a culture-hero grows. In the case of this 'All-father,' each trait and characteristic can be clearly traced back to the structure and interests of the social body which believes in him. He is, according to Howitt, an old black-fellow to whom the natives, under different names, attribute the origin of everything. The whole content of their notion is clearly an extension through fancy of the esteem in which the actual old men of the different groups are held. They are regarded with the greatest respect, and upon them rests the determination of all questions of tribal polity and of ceremonial activity. This 'old man' is represented as formerly dwelling upon earth, but afterward ascending to the sky-land, where he still observes mankind, going and doing what he pleases. Even his attribute of immortality is quite easily explainable, for in this particular he merely realizes the natural state of mankind, for all would live forever if not prematurely killed by evil magic.[1]

This culture-hero of the southeast Australians "is the embodiment," says Howitt, "of the idea of a venerable, kindly head-man of a tribe, full of knowledge and tribal wisdom, and all-powerful in magic, of which he is the source, with virtues, feelings, passions, such as the aborigines regard them." He

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 500. This is a most interesting suggestion as to the origin of the idea of the continued existence of deities. Inasmuch as violent deaths or deaths from disease were probably the most familiar type to primitive man, it is easy to see that the idea of death would tend to get connected with that of the mysterious potency of nature, usable as it is both for good and for ill. He would come to believe, then, that, but for the evil intent of some one wielding this terrible force, his existence as a man might continue without any definitely assigned limits. This notion of death as due to exercise of 'magic power,' with evil intent, is practically universal among natural races.

is imagined simply as the idealization of those qualities which they conceive as worthy of imitation. "Such would be a man who is skilful in the use of weapons of offence and defence, all-powerful in magic, but generous and liberal to his people, who does no injury or violence to any one, yet treats with severity any breaches of custom and morality." He has no divine significance, however, in their eyes, and is seldom mentioned.[1] The term 'father,' applied to him, is in common use with reference to all the elder men of the groups, and hence has significance, not as indicating their possession of the Christian notion of a divine father, but as indicating possible conditions from which more advanced notions may have sprung.

This 'All-father' of the Australians is of especial interest because the social origin of all his attributes is so clearly in evidence, attributes which are, as far as they themselves are concerned, sufficient for quite a definite deity, but which in this case do not apply to one who receives any worship or who is connected in any way with their ceremonial activities. We have in him, as it were, a one-sided development, a character which has acquired the attributes of a deity in a social group which does not seem to feel the need of a deity, possibly because of the peculiar way in which its attention is absorbed by the initiation ceremonies and other rites. At any rate, it is evident that the attributes of a divine personage are so definitely of social origin that they may appear without the clear development of the deistic consciousness itself.

Among the Central Australians with a less advanced social organization there are many stories of creators or transformers. These beings are conceived as related to the rites and customs

[1] Howitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 501 and 507. Cf. with Howitt's account that of Parker, *The Euahlayi Tribe*, among which branch of Australians the 'All-father' becomes a quasi-deity.

of the groups, and are interesting, not as deities, but as illustrations of how social bodies readily associate the existing status of things with the exercise of a peculiar prowess of personal beings. As we have said, this is a real step in the natural history of the deistic conceptions of religion.

Other significant illustrations are furnished by the Todas. The exact nature of their notions of deities is obscure because of the probable change which has taken place in their economic interests. They really have a pantheon of gods, and what we wish here to call attention to is that these well-developed gods have, many of them, the earmarks of culture-heroes. Thus, there is an added presumption that the culture-hero may, under appropriate social conditions, become a god.

Of especial interest is the myth regarding one of their more important gods, Meilitars. He is said to have been a Toda youth of great cunning. The gods said of him, "We cannot kill him; he has some *power;* let us try his *power.*" (Italics ours.) Various natural features of their country they explain as the outcome of these tests. The gods could not outwit him, and so finally admitted that he, also, was a god. He is closely associated with two clans and with the dairy ritual of one in particular, and the stories told of him show quite clearly that he is a deity developed from an ordinary culture-hero and trickster.[1] We should not fail to note that the sign which first betrayed his unusual character was his possession of some sort of *power.* Here, then, we have a god who is ideally a member of a social group, and he might well have been at one time a real man distinguished by his cunning and the reputation of his having unusual powers.

The culture-heroes of the North American Indians, whether they be men or animals, are all thought to have been in peculiar contact with the mysterious potency, *wakonda, manitou,*

[1] Cf. Rivers, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

etc., as it is variously called. In many, if not in all, cases they are, in part, low tricksters. In this phase they certainly do not rise to the dignity of deities, but are rather the idealization of what is striven after by the tribe in its various sports. But in many cases the approach to a deity is made in the association of these beings with the objects of social interest in the tribe and with its origin, history, and ceremonials.[1]

More extended illustration of the culture-hero conception is scarcely necessary here. What we are desirous of emphasizing is that in it and related concepts there is excellent illustration of the tendency of social groups to think of what concerns them in personal terms. The culture-hero is not of necessity a divinity, but rather a man, much like ordinary men, or even an animal, who by luck or cunning has done things which continue for all time, sometimes to the advantage, sometimes to the disadvantage, of mankind. Sometimes he is a mere trickster, sometimes a really great figure in the mythical history of the tribe. He is generally thought of as possessing peculiar powers or unusual control over the 'power.'

There is an interesting similarity between the myth of the Norwegian king, discussed above, and the stories of the culture-heroes. In both cases a person is regarded as having had great influence over the welfare of his tribe through his superior ability. As has been suggested, in proportion as this person is conceived as playing a part in the present active life of the group, does his rôle as deity really appear. The beginnings of this may be seen among the Melanesians, where certain spirits and ghosts are supposed to be able to exert their *mana*

[1] The reader is urged to consult, in this connection, the valuable Introduction by Boas to "The traditions of the Thompson River Indians," James Teit, *Memoirs of the American Folklore Society*, Vol. VI. Dr. Boas here discusses the various aspects of the culture-hero as he appears among the Indians of the Northwest, tracing the evolution from the selfish trickster to the altruistic personage who is a quasi-deity.

for or against living men, and, in consequence, rites have developed suggestive of religious ceremonies, for the purpose of inducing in the spirit a proper attitude toward living men. It is instructive to think of ancestor-worship in this connection. The culture-hero and the ancestor are, of course, not convertible terms, but the same psychical attitude is present in some measure in the regard accorded to each. In addition to other elements undoubtedly entering into the worship of ancestors, the idea is doubtless quite often present that they have control over the 'power' in a marked degree, so that they are reverenced and dreaded as a matter of course. This belief in the unusual powers of the dead is very evident in the ancestor-worship described by Leonard as existing among the Niger tribes.

These conceptions, whether of ancestors or culture-heroes, are all social products, the outcome of definite types of social ideals and social organization. Just why they are not always divinities depends upon various intricate social conditions, which we shall not always be able to specify. Our interest here is in the fact that the idea of worthfulness, and especially of worth as dependent upon a mystic potence, does in reality become associated with persons and sometimes with their ghosts and with mythical beings of various kinds.

The above considerations lend weight to our hypothesis that deities are constructions within particular social matrices, and acquire their definiteness and individuality, as far as they have any at all, in the atmosphere of social intercourse. They are not formed merely upon the analogy of social life and its ideals, they are rather quite explainable extensions, or developments, of that life with reference to certain acute interests. The deity is not the product of some supposed faculty of personification, but is possibly an actual person to start

with, who is regarded as closely and actively related to some acute interest. The worship is not based upon the analogy of social activity; it is a portion of this activity extended to include within its scope the supposedly superior person. So, also, the characteristics of the deity are not merely reflections of the ideals of the social group, they are extensions of concepts in daily use in ordinary social intercourse. The whole set of value-attitudes clustering about the deity have thus acquired their specific form and permanence. Their association with a deity is not, however, an afterthought, for the deity is the concrete and communicable form in which they often first come to consciousness.

VII

We have seen above how varied are the ways in which the primitive world of values may acquire personal associations, and how, when these are once established, the ground is laid for the general development of deistic 'concepts.'[1] This

[1] The account here offered of the origin of deities is very different from the theory proposed by some philologists, namely, that they are personifications of natural objects and natural phenomena. As Farnell says (*Cults of the Greek States*, Vol. I, p. 4): "It is doubtful if this formula (that of personification) is ever of any avail for explaining the origins of any religion; whether the personification of a natural phenomenon is a phrase appropriate to the process which gives birth to the earliest religious conceptions of a primitive race. The words suggest the belief, for instance, that the primitive ancestor of the Greek was aware of certain natural phenomena as such, and then by a voluntary effort gave them a personal and human form in his imagination. It is doubtful if the primitive mind could personify things thus, for it probably lacked this sense of the limits of personality, or the border-line between the sentient and the non-sentient." Farnell's strictures upon the personification theory are quite legitimate. What has often seemed to be personification turns out, upon closer examination, to have been originally something quite different; *i.e.* either an impersonal 'force' is the object of attention, or a person or spirit is respected because of its supposed control over this 'force.' Furthermore, the *develop-*

further development is conditioned almost entirely by the play of social processes and modes of thought.

The first and most obvious of these social influences is that which was discussed at length in the preceding section, namely, that which appears in the tendency to associate vital interests with the activity of some person or animal. The social body, as has also been shown, adds further determination to 'concepts' of deities by the methods of intercourse and activity prevailing within it. It is only when this process of socialization begins that the deity acquires much definite character and becomes the embodiment of the higher valuations of the group. Another phase of the social reaction upon embryonic deities is the tendency, mentioned above, to consider them members of the group formed by the worshippers themselves. This belief may find various expressions, but usually the god is regarded as the parent or creator of the tribe or clan.[1] Such a belief may be developed in part through a reverence for actual ancestors, but it is also partly due to the fact that the primitive man can clearly envisage as friendly only those things or persons which he can make a part of his group.[2]

But the lines of social determination are intricate, and extend even farther than indicated above. The *methods* by which a group deals with its deities are important factors in the development of their characters. Even if a primitive race started out with the vague notion of forces, impersonal and quasi-mechanical, it could scarcely avoid falling into social methods of dealing with them, and these methods would

ment a deity may pass through is not due to a development of personifying power in a people, but is rather, as we have shown, due to a tendency to associate *persons* with matters of social interest and concern.

[1] Cf. Saussaye, *The Religion of the Ancient Teutons*, p. 404; W. R. Smith and G. A. Barton, on the primitive Semites. Similar illustrations are furnished by practically all the natural religions.

[2] *Religion of the Semites*, 2d ed., p. 121.

be a constant stimulus to the group to conceive of them as personal or as under the control of personal beings. At any rate, if we take those peoples which do have fairly definite personal concepts of superior powers, we find the methods of approaching them are clearly extensions of the ordinary methods of social intercourse. They are evidently carried directly over from the methods of seeking the help or favor of fellow-men. Granted that the idea of a superior personality once appears in the religious consciousness, it is easy to see that the problem of worship itself, and of different types of worship, is quite a simple one. It seems almost self-evident that the deity will be approached and treated precisely along the lines of intercourse within the group of worshippers. He will be bargained with, or treated with respect, because he is recognized as having the advantage in power. He will be flattered, offered gifts, feasted, and entreated precisely as would occur in a human society if any member were felt to surpass the rest in some important type of excellence. In general, the modes of worship will be, first of all, repetitions of the acts called forth by the object or situation which has aroused the interest. In what better way could keepers of flocks conceive of honoring their god and keeping him interested in men than by the ordinary communal feast, of recognized importance in maintaining proper social relations on the human side? The peoples with whom witchcraft is of dominating importance will necessarily treat their deities after the manner of treating the human sorcerer. Likewise, phallic rites grow out of one form of social intercourse, and a deity of fertility would naturally be worshipped through sexual excesses.

Thus, what may be called the framework of the deity is dependent upon the objects of social interest and the methods of social activity. There is still, however, a *body*, or *filling*

in, to account for, and this is in large measure due to the play of fancy as stimulated by human associations. It is easy to see how this factor is operative, and that it would be along lines in which the people's ideas are already running. The oldest myths of Isis represent her "as an independent deity dwelling in the midst of the ponds without husband or lover, who gave birth spontaneously to a son whom she suckled among the reeds." [1] The primary concept here is apparently that of a goddess of fertility, the personal statement of the feeling that in damp, watery places there is a 'power' which is the cause of vegetable growth. But a polyandrous and exogamous social group could not, in its play of fancy about such a person, think of her as being different from themselves, and consequently the picture of her as isolated and without husband or lover would be drawn. When, at a later period, she is represented as married to Osiris, the newer social order has clearly modified the play of fancy. We may certainly regard idle fancy and story-telling, as these inevitably appear in social groups, as of the greatest importance in the development of the content and coloring of all possible deistic concepts. In this fancy we do not have a radically new factor, but simply a continuation, in a particular channel, of the general social process, which may manifest itself in the most varied ways.

The importance of the social group in the determination of its deities is well illustrated by a large mass of material already discussed in other connections. The material to which we refer is that which brings to light the relation between definiteness of religious consciousness and the degree of social organization.[2] If we grant the validity of the position before taken upon this point, we may see in the case of deities merely special instances of the kind already referred

[1] Barton, *Semitic Origins*, p. 116.
[2] *Vide supra*, Chap. IV.

to. In a general way it seems to be true that primitive and loosely organized groups have scattering and ill-organized ideas of deities, whereas, in better-developed groups, the gods are more definitely conceived and have more clearly defined powers.[1] Many illustrations which seem apposite might be given, and yet none are entirely satisfactory, because it is not possible, with entire assurance, to grade different peoples according to their degree of social development,[2] and we are, furthermore, far from sure, in most cases, that we have an adequate notion of the actual deistic concepts themselves, which we thus propose to call higher or lower. We can say, in general, that peoples subjected to highly centralized and absolute forms of government usually have equally centralized and absolute systems of deities, while peoples having little or no tribal organization have vaguely conceived and even transient deities. But there are so many factors to be taken into account in all such cases that we cannot make dogmatic assertions about any of them. Both extremes we may find among various African tribes, and it is certainly significant that the Melanesians,[3] with almost no organized political life and uncertain chieftainship, if they have deities at all, have only embryonic ones.

Among the ancient Teutons the gods clearly symbolized the values inherent in the political organization. Saussaye says: ". . . the moral functions of the gods are identical with their position as guardians and defenders of *thing* and

[1] Thus Pfleiderer says (*Philosophy of Religion*), Gifford Lecturers, 1894, Vol. I, p. 107), that spirits were only definitely religious when social organization began to be. "So long as men still lived in roaming hordes without social organization, there was also still merely an indefinite swarm of spirits without individual qualities." Gods arise with family, clan, and tribe. The divine hierarchy develops *pari passu* with political institutions.

[2] *Vide* chapter preceding, p. 208.

[3] Codrington, *The Melanesians*, Chap. III.

host. In so far as we are actually acquainted with the part they play in Teutonic law and in the cult, we find the gods punishing those who transgress against them, or who violate the sacred peace, *i.e.* the regular order of legal procedure or of the military camp. . . . They have in no sense become the embodiment of certain moral qualities or ideals."[1] According to the same writer, ideas of gods seem to have had little place in the thought of the free, wandering Vikings. That many of them were godless means simply that their reliance upon their own strength, in their wandering life of danger, was not favorable to the development of deities.

We are concerned in this chapter only with the deities of relatively primitive religions. The natural history of higher conceptions will be taken up in the following chapter. Inasmuch as a further examination of the social determination of deities would bring us into these higher phases of the subject, we may properly reserve other aspects for the next section.

[1] *The Religion of the Ancient Teutons*, p. 403.

CHAPTER X

THE PROBLEM OF MONOTHEISM AND OF ETHICAL CONCEPTIONS OF THE DEITY

THUS far our attention has been confined entirely to the origin and early development of deistic ideas. We have tried to show that they have a fairly ascertainable natural history. The general point of view has been about as follows: A deity is a symbol, more or less personal in form, of a value or values which have arisen in the experience of some individual person or people. "Every religious standpoint gathers up into its concept of God the highest known values. Not only ethical and æsthetic interests, but also more especially the enthusiasms as well as the feelings of dependence, excited in the struggle for life, urge to a deeper and deeper concentration, which disburdens itself at last in the cry of 'God.'"[1] As we have seen, there are values of all grades in experience, but the most insistent and the most permanent of them tend, quite often, to be conceived in personal terms, that is, to be associated with, or symbolized by, the expression of the will of some conscious agent.

The universe as it is presented to man, whether he be civilized or savage, has qualities as well as parts. The forces of nature affect him in various ways; he has purposes and hopes which he cannot but strive to realize; he has fears from which he cannot but flee. Thus his life is far from being a colorless affair. Moreover, every detail of his world, which he has literally built up through his varied strivings, is

[1] Höffding, *The Philosophy of Religion*, p. 61.

saturated with his own personality and with all sorts of elements derived from his human associations. He must think largely in social terms and by means of social symbols. It is thus almost inevitable that he should express his conception of the ultimate meaning of things, the significance of his life and his efforts in terms of personal and social relationships.[1] This tendency has been amply illustrated in the preceding chapter.

We have also seen that primitive man vaguely conceives of the world as pervaded by 'force' which is constantly affecting him in vital ways and which he strives in some measure to control. Before this notion, however, can become in any sense a religious one, it must be associated with conscious personal agents. We have tried to show how this may occur, and, further, how the belief in spirit beings, likewise a theory not intrinsically religious, assists the primitive man in bringing his world, with its piecemeal conceptions of force, into some sort of personal relationship with himself. The development which is thus mediated can hardly be said to be in the direction of a scientific view of nature. Instead, it furnishes a very favorable context, through its socialized conception of the world, for the development of an appreciative rather than a descriptive attitude. As Höffding says, "religion does not afford an understanding of existence such as the intellect demands, neither of special events, nor are its ideas conclusions for scientific thought." They are rather figures whose meaning, as far as they can have any at all, must be in their "serving as symbolical expressions for the feelings, the aspirations, and the wishes of men in their

[1] Cf. Perry, Ralph Barton, *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. 15, p. 67: "My conception of God contains an idea of my own interests, an idea of the disposition of the universe toward my interests and some plan for the reconciliation of these terms." Also *The Monist*, October, 1904, p. 756, "The religious object, God, is a social object, common to me and my neighbor."

struggle for existence." "Dogma has," however, "hung its leaden weight around the neck of these symbols, dragging them down into spheres in which they are exposed both to criticism and to mockery." [1]

The idea, then, of a deity, built up in *some* manner, whether in the precise way we have outlined or not, represents the extreme development of the socialized conception of the universe. It does not come from man's attempt to give a scientific description of the world, but expresses rather the keenness with which he feels his personal relation to the general order of existence. This, certainly, is the truth regarding the religious attitude, whether such relations between man and the world actually exist or not.

Since the concepts of religion symbolize values rather than describe an objective order of existence, the psychologist must be careful to avoid treating them in the same way as he would the concepts of science. All such expressions as 'God,' 'divine life,' 'larger life,' 'justification by faith,' current in the religious thought of many people, may be assumed to stand for some facts in the experience of the religious mind. It is for the psychologist to determine what these facts may be and to restate them in psychological form. He cannot use them unanalyzed and in their popular sense.

He will see that the various conceptions of religion grow out of certain valuational attitudes in religious individuals. This is entirely aside from the question of their objective truth or falsity. The mere fact that they are beliefs of some people means that there is something in the experience of these people which these concepts stand for, or symbolize. But while these concepts refer to facts of experience, it is important to note that they are not facts which belong to the same species as percepts. The religionist may say that he

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 84, 93.

perceives God as clearly as he does a house, but he speaks popularly and not scientifically. What he really means is that he is conscious of a certain value in his experience, a value which is as vivid to him, so he thinks, as the perception of an external object. The metaphysician and the practical religious individual may quite believe that God exists as an objective fact, and they may offer proof that is to them convincing. Psychologically, however, God is not perceived, nor can the divine mind be regarded as something in some way continuous with the experience of the psychologist through its subconscious phases. God may be an existing fact, but even the religious man would hardly claim that his deity is a phenomenon, and hence capable of statement in phenomenal terms. If there is a divine mind, its relationship to the human mind cannot be expressed in any spatial or temporal terms, nor in terms of cause, nor in any other thought category.[1] In other words, however the naïve mind may choose to symbolize that relationship, it is not a relation of which psychology can take any cognizance. As far as psychology is concerned, the deity may be said to be a value-attitude of a certain kind in the consciousness of some individual or individuals.

One of the objects of the psychology of religion is to trace the development of these religious values out of the simpler types of value-attitude, and to state in terms of the rest of experience the counterparts of such objective expressions of value as God, immortality, faith, and the divine life. In other words, if psychology is concerned with a description of the facts and laws of consciousness, and if the psychology of religion is a subdivision of this more general science, it deals simply with a certain portion of the conscious contents and activities which are the subject-matter of general psychology.

[1] *Vide* Chapter I, *supra*, p. 12.

It must state in the accepted language of psychology the nature of those conscious states which are called religious.

The psychologist has given, we repeat, an individual consciousness capable of being modified by various stimuli, but it is not, as far as he is concerned, a part of a larger life, either social or divine. As far as the individual consciousness is concerned, these are simply terms which symbolize immediately experienced values of various kinds. As we have already suggested, it is the business of the psychologist to endeavor to state the objective conditions under which these value-attitudes arise. This is true, whether the value be æsthetic or religious. It should be evident, however, that these conditions cannot be explained through the use of the value terms themselves. Thus the consciousness of æsthetic value is not by any means accounted for by saying that the person perceives a beautiful object. So, also, the religious consciousness is not explained by the statement that the soul in some way perceives, or is cognizant of divine values.

The above considerations suggest the type of objection we should urge against such a statement as the following: "If there is a divine life over and above the separate streams of individual lives, the welling up of this larger life in the experience of the individual is precisely the point of contact between the individual person and God. The organizing centre for religious as well as social life lies beyond the boundary line of the merely individual consciousness."[1] This is a pseudo-psychological explanation of the experience of conversion. If we translate it into genuine psychological concepts, the meaning implied seems to be something like this: The significance of the experience of the moment is not comprised in its bare factual presence, that is, as it appears super-

[1] "The psychology of religion," J. D. Stoops, *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, Vol. II, p. 512.

ficially. The experience of the moment comes in a certain context of habit; its present structure is strictly relative to innumerable previous experiences of the individual. No experience can be completely described by its central fact or focus. Sometimes we are more conscious of the setting of appreciation, value, worth, or significance, whatever we may call it, than at other times. In popular language we may say that there is then 'the welling up of a larger life,' of a social consciousness, or of a divine consciousness; but, in the language of psychology, that which 'wells up' is an accumulation of subtle value-attitudes and habits which are definitely related to our previous experience and are developed out of it and *it only*.

In saying all this, the psychologist need not dogmatically assert that his description of the structure of experience, its contents and its values, is an exhaustive one. It is quite likely that every fact of consciousness means more in the ultimate constitution of things (whatever that may be) than we can ever state in our descriptions, but as far as psychology has anything to say about it, the description is complete when it has been made in terms of the experience of the individual, taken in its entirety, and not as a fact of the present moment. In the ultimate constitution of things, this may be the contact of the individual person with God. The broader relationships of the present moment may be so vivid in consciousness, their significance for the life as a whole may be so great that they may merit the objective symbol of *divine* or of *God*, but, from the point of view of science, *the experience is still a 'value-attitude'* arising as an organic part of the stream of consciousness of the individual.

The psychology of religion should, then, investigate the concepts, emotions, and attitudes of the individual which are commonly called religious, interpreting them in relation to the other

facts of consciousness. For the psychologist, God is not a postulate nor an elementary factor in the production of the religious life. He is one of the concepts of some religious lives, and as such needs explanation. (We may say the same of all the other objects with which the religious mind constructs and describes its universe of values.) So much for the general point of view. It may seem to some that it is applicable enough in the remote world of primitive religion, but that it cannot be applied either to explain the origin or to describe the present status of the loftier conceptions of God. What, then, of monotheism, and especially ethical monotheism? Are these presuppositions and those of the preceding chapter adequate for the belief in a single supreme God who demands mercy rather than sacrifice?

The questions thus raised are made the more difficult to answer because of the presuppositions one usually brings to them. To the *beginnings* of ethical monotheism, as they are seen in the later religion of Israel, are ascribed the full content of meaning that they have for the reflective religious consciousness of to-day. Consequently there seems to be an inevitable hiatus between the earlier religion of these people and their later faith. This hiatus is deepened by the assumption that, while *some* value-concepts may be admitted to have had a natural history, there are some others *so* exalted that they cannot be so explained. In fact, to attempt to trace their origin in simpler conditions is merely an attempt to deprive them of their supreme worth. Now this very feeling that some values must be put into a world of their own is, itself, one of the problems with which the psychology of the appreciative consciousness must deal. Fortunately, the beginnings of the tendency can be clearly traced in various primitive modes of thought. It may best be analyzed and illustrated in connection with our general inquiry into the origin of the

monotheistic idea. It will find further illustration in our discussion of the development of the ethical attributes of the deity.

In the atmosphere of the social group we may find every essential factor for the evolution of the higher types of monotheism.[1] It is back to the social matrix also that we must continually go in order to interpret properly each successive step in the development of religious ideas. There is no necessary psychological continuity between the so-called stages of religious evolution, such as fetichism, polytheism, henotheism, and monotheism. If the idea of a god is the expression of certain lines of social development, if it is true that that idea represents, as it were, a moment in this social process, it is evident that its meaning must always be sought within the social plane in which it has appeared. The social life of man has developed along widely different lines, and widely differing generalizations of value have thus been produced. One might almost say, *a priori*, that, under favoring conditions of social organization and social interest, the notion of a single supreme being could appear upon a relatively low plane of culture, and, further, that it might eventually disappear, as it arose, through social changes which would render it meaningless. Fortunately, we do find cases where something of this sort seems to have taken place, cases which would otherwise be inexplicable. Hose and MacDougall report certain tribes in the interior of Borneo which seem to have a belief in a supreme being, while the more highly developed coastal tribes are polytheists. These investigators comment as follows: "We are disposed to regard this conception as one that, amid the perpetual flux of opinion and belief which obtains among peoples destitute of written rec-

[1] For a statement of the opposite point of view cf. Nassau, *Fetichism in West Africa*, Chap. III, and Trumbull, *The Blood Covenant*.

ords, may be comparatively rapidly and easily arrived at under favorable conditions, such as seem to be afforded by tribes like the Kenyahs and Kayans, warlike prosperous tribes subordinated to strong chiefs, and may then remain as a vestige only to be discerned by curious research in the minds of a few individuals, as among the Ibans, or [certain tribes of] the Australian blacks, until another turn in Fortune's wheel, perhaps the birth of some overmastering personality or a revival of national and tribal vigor, gives it a new period of life and power." [1]

We have already mentioned the single quasi-deity of the tribes of southeast Australia observed by Howitt. As we have seen, this tribal 'All-father' is, in the case of the Euahlayi tribe,[2] a genuine deity to whom prayers are offered, and who has a certain ethical significance through his relation to the mores of the tribe. This naïve monotheism is, however, not indicative of a higher religious development than that possessed by the Central Australians, who have no deistic ideas at all. It means rather that the religious values in the two groups are expressed in different ways, values which are not appreciably higher in one case than in the other. Thus we may say that it is, at least, possible for the notion of a single supreme deity to appear at a relatively low stage of religious development.

The essential elements of a supreme being are, moreover, present in a merely tribal god. He is the symbol of the most dominating values in the tribe's experience. For practical purposes, he is a *supreme* being because the tribe itself is a limit to the comprehension of further values. Its vision cannot extend beyond itself or its ancestors. The truth of

[1] *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXI, p. 213. Cf. also Lang, Andrew, *The Making of Religion*, 1898, Chap. X.

[2] Parker, *The Euahlayi Tribe*, London, 1905, pp. 4–10.

this is well illustrated by the Arunta, who regard it as meaningless or absurd to inquire what happened before the time of the *Alcheringa*, their ancestors. That is, as far as the psychological attitude is concerned, the *Alcheringa* symbolize the infinitely remote past, the limits of all that is conceivable. To their minds the notion of a beyond is as irrational as the notion of two infinite spaces or two infinitely powerful deities would be to us. It may be regarded as generally true that, for the primitive man, his tribe, together with what affects it for good or ill, is a closed universe beyond which his thought cannot penetrate. Whatever new facts force themselves upon his attention must be related in some way in his universe of thought. Thus some of the Australians thought that the first whites they saw were reincarnations of their own dead, as did also Nassau's West Africans. Whatever the primitive man finds to be friendly to himself he conceives as in some way his kin and hence as a part of his group. Whatever has proved to be unfriendly is such because of the way in which it affects the group, and such an object or person, also, thus finds a place in the groupal horizon. That which does not affect for good or ill lies, of course, outside of the pale of his value-judgments and is for him non-existent.

Thus all the emotional and intellectual elements which go to make up the attitude toward a supreme being are present, or may be present, in the conception of a tribal god. Such a deity may easily completely fill the horizon of his worshippers. He may be psychologically identical with the one infinite God of some of the higher culture religions. It is only intellectually that he may be recognized as not all-powerful, or as one among the gods of other tribes. The tribe being the limit beyond which the valuational attitude cannot extend, we can see how even a henotheistic god may be the equivalent of a monotheistic conception. If for any reason

the tribal limits are broken down, the tribal deity may be transformed, quite naturally, into one of a truly monotheistic type, provided the attitudes, of which he is the expression, are stable enough to survive the shock. The concept of a single god is then, as far as religion is concerned, not the outcome of an intellectual development primarily, or a hypothetical being constructed by a process of abstraction and observation of the uniformity of nature.

As for the monotheism of the Hebrews, then, it seems that it is not unique, nor is its development difficult to understand on the basis of a broader knowledge of primitive religion. Semitic scholars of to-day are quite generally agreed that the religion of Yahweh had its rise in the tribal religion of the nomadic Kenites with whom the Israelites came in contact in their wanderings in the peninsula of Sinai.[1] He was presented to them at a crisis in their national development as their deliverer and leader. The Israelitish leaders apparently entered into a covenant with him that their people should therefore serve him for all time. We know that many Semitic groups had tribal deities, and these were, psychologically, supreme deities, as we have shown above. Thus at the very beginning there were conditions which made for a higher monotheism in the worship of Yahweh.[2]

It will not be profitable here to enter into the details of the inevitable struggle between the cult of Yahweh and those of Israel's earlier deities. This struggle was probably less acute in the nomadic period before the invasion of Canaan,[3]

[1] Cf. Budde, *The Religion of Israel to the Exile*, Chap. I, and Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*. For a concise summary of the arguments in favor of this view, *vide* Barton, *Semitic Origins*, pp. 275–278.

[2] Professor George Adam Smith mentions this fact but fails to grasp its significance for the development of the later Hebrew conception. Cf. *Preaching of the Old Testament*, p. 125.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

because the interests and needs of the desert found ready expression in the character and ritual of a god of the desert. Here, then, they had a naïve monotheism analogous to that of the primitive tribes mentioned above. At least we may say that in proportion as Yahweh did thus fill their religious horizon, he was, by so much, a single supreme god.

When, however, the Israelites entered Canaan and gradually took up an agricultural life, they naturally recognized the importance of other deities, especially the Baalim of the land, and there is no reason to believe that they regarded the worship of the new gods as inconsistent with their previous greater interest in Yahweh. Probably the worship of Baal was not distinguished by the people from worship of Yahweh. Their mode of life had changed and there came about as a result a weakening of the psychological monotheism of the desert. If it is true that Yahweh was originally a sort of war-god,[1] the various periods of conquest, first the scattering ones under Joshua and the Judges, and later the organized one of Saul and David, served to keep alive and to stir up the interest in his cult, although it probably did not raise him to where he could fill the whole religious horizon. The agricultural interests were too many and insistent, and these could only be expressed in terms of Baal worship. Yahweh was a god of the mountain, of the desert, and of war, and he could not be available for the exigencies of an agricultural life. Apparently the national disasters, through foreign invasion, which later overtook them served to arouse the old interest in the Yahweh cult, but even then only with a relatively small number, the prophets. That is to say, the disintegration of national life provoked more or less of a reflective attitude in some of the men who were witnesses to it. The tradition of the ancient victories under Yahweh would naturally suggest that

[1] Cf. Budde, *op. cit.*, pp. 26 f.

his worship, which was little more than coördinate with that of the local gods of Canaan, should be revived; it would suggest that the very cause of these disasters was the neglect of the covenant with the old war-god of the desert, and that the other gods might be, after all, powerless or even non-existent. Certainly as far as mere monotheism was concerned, the prophets had all that was necessary for the construction of such a concept in the traditions of the past and in the social conditions of their present.

When the complete dissolution of their national life came about in the Assyrian and Babylonian captivity, the local deities would, of course, lose all significance for even the masses of the people, and they must have thought, as well, that Yahweh could no longer lay claim to being a real god, since his people had been reduced to such miserable straits. But it is not strange that a few of the more thoughtful should have interpreted this disaster, not in terms of Yahweh's unreality but in terms of the broken covenant. For such as took this view, he would necessarily emerge, as the one remaining vestige of their religious life, with a character immensely enriched through the fact that he had so sternly punished the breaking of the covenant. As Budde says, the religion of Yahweh was thus detached from the idea of the continued existence and prosperity of the nation. "Israel does not need any more to be an independent people in order to be sure of Yahweh's favor and to enjoy his blessings." [1]

From what we know of the development of the religion of Yahweh, we may infer with Robertson Smith that the monotheism of the Hebrews was not that of the subjective religious thought of to-day, neither was it the monotheism of metaphysics.[2] It is by reading modern conceptions back, that the

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 195.
[2] *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 60–63.

problem of accounting for its development has seemed to some insoluble from a naturalistic point of view. We have pointed out that there is a difference between a psychological and a metaphysical monotheism. That of the Hebrews was largely the former. If and so far as Yahweh filled the mental horizon of the people, or certain ones of them, by giving them victory over their enemies, or leading them through great crises, or if he seemed completely adequate for the needs of any particular period, then, for those persons, or for those times, he was literally the only god. They might speak of the gods of Moab or of Assyria, but the recognition would be only intellectual. As far as they themselves were concerned, Yahweh was the *only* god. As Robertson Smith says, it was a purely practical question with them. The problem of the metaphysical existence of the other gods did not present itself. Absorbed in conflicts with other nations, they had no interest in the theoretical question as to the relation of these gods to reality. The practical point was that Yahweh *proved* himself the stronger. In the terms used earlier in this chapter, he represented to them all that seemed worth while, was the symbol of their highest valuations. This was practical monotheism, and it is the type in large measure of even later ages.

As for the problem of metaphysical monotheism, we cannot be sure that it presented itself even to the later prophet who declared that the gods of the nations had no existence beyond their imaged forms, that they were simply stocks and stones. Such a statement may have been made simply to emphasize the indefinitely greater reality that the Hebrew god was felt to represent. At any rate, even in New Testament times, and much later, these other deities were admitted to have a spiritual existence, though degraded to the level of demons.

To regard Hebrew monotheism as a metaphysical concep-

tion would be to deprive it of a large measure of its unique interest. It is a much simpler process for a speculative philosopher to arrive at such a notion than for a relatively large number of people to gain it as a guiding *motif* of life. The concept of an absolute unconditioned existence has been readily constructed by many of the philosophers of other religions.

The stand has been well taken by many scholars (*e.g.* W. R. Smith and Budde) that the point of real interest in the religion of the Hebrews is that of the *personal* character of Yahweh, and this brings us to a consideration of how the concept of his character developed in the Hebrew mind.

In taking up this question, we must bear in mind that, as psychologists, we are in no wise concerned with the question of whether there is a metaphysical being corresponding to the Hebrew Yahweh. In fact, we must make the inquiry as if there were no such being. We have said that the concept, God, symbolizes in social, and hence tangible terms, certain aspects of the meaning of existence, the worthfulness of human endeavor, whether it be that as understood by the savage, occupied with his fetich object, or that conceived by a civilized man of broad knowledge and deep insight. That life really has deep and abiding values will be admitted by most people. But what they shall be called, or in what terms they shall be described, is largely a matter of indifference, provided they are so conceived that they enter vitally into one's life and conduct. The whole problem is one of practice rather than of nomenclature. If there are values in life beyond barely living the present moment, how can they be brought into living relation with the things which must be done moment by moment? For most people, the personal method of conceiving them is almost inevitable and is usually the most vital. We saw in the preceding chapter how, on primi-

tive levels of culture, these higher values become associated with personal agency and hence with personal character.

From the point of view here developed, the whole problem of the gradual unfolding of the character of a supreme and all-wise God in human consciousness becomes the problem of the development of human character through struggle with nature, through social intercourse, and especially through reflection upon the conflicts which thus arise. Not all races have been able to reflect in any sustained or fruitful way and it is largely on this account that not all have arrived at higher deistic conceptions. In saying this we do not mean that all deities, high as well as low, are mere copies of the actual every-day characters of their worshippers. To hold that among even the lower races the gods are merely the reflection of the debased characters of the devotees is to fail to recognize that there is a reaching out, projective side to one's experience, as well as a side of realized achievement. We are always conscious of there being more than we are able, at a given time, to bring into actual being. By this we mean no metaphysical something, but merely that experience is projective, that it has a *direction of movement* as well as a body of accomplished fact. It is this projective aspect of experience which is developed and enriched by reflection. Out of conflict and discrepancy the question is constantly arising in the mind of a reflective man, 'Whither do I tend?' This reflective enrichment of experience as a projective process (*i.e.* a process that is really striving and tending somewhere) reacts upon and interprets and determines present attainment.

Thus, while a god is always a reflection of the character of his worshippers, we must remember that this character is never altogether static, that it has always a something that may be termed its ideal quality. If this is true of even the savage, with his crude gods, we have adequate ground to

account for the development of even the loftiest conception of a divine being.[1]

Instead, then, of assuming that a metaphysical being gradually unfolds himself to mankind and little by little brushes away the false gods, we should say that man, through reflection upon the practical problems of life, especially such as grow out of the ethics of custom, has come to deeper and more vital conceptions of values. Now, if a group of people who are developing a reflective type of consciousness are already in possession of an unreflective notion of a deity, in whom, as they are taught by tradition, are embodied the values expressed in customary morality, they will interpret the results of their reflection as new revelations of the character of their god. Thus Budde says of Israel, "Whenever things went badly with the people, it was far from thinking that Yahweh had not power to help. On the contrary, its conscience awaked each time to the questions: 'Wherein have I deserved the displeasure of Yahweh? What must I do to insure a renewal of His favor and help?' Thus arose a really living force, whose operation tended to the ethical development of Israel's religion."[2] That such questions as these, reflectively raised, should be productive of the highest type of moral growth is unquestionable. There is no reason for assuming that some moral conceptions are *so* exalted that they cannot have had a natural history.

Thus, we would say that the character of Yahweh was *built up* rather than *progressively revealed*, for by such a statement we *do* account for the practical fact of the evolution of a

[1] This is not equivalent to the dictum that the wish has made the god. As Höffding points out, this "ignores the complex conditions under which the formation of religious ideas takes place. . . . An important side of religious development consists precisely in the quiet influence exerted upon feeling by knowledge," *i.e.* reflection, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 37.

deity, without becoming involved in the insoluble problem of how an absolutely complete and perfect metaphysical being can possibly ever reveal himself in crude and partial forms, much less have any relation to that which is finite. This view takes nothing from the practical value of God and has, in addition, the advantage of admitting to human experience a genuine and positive value rather than the pseudo or mock values, which are all that a metaphysics of 'the absolute' are able to grant it.

The higher ethical conception of Yahweh seems to offer much difficulty to students of the Old Testament. Professor George Adam Smith, who may be taken as representative of a large class, argues that it can be explained only upon the basis of a direct revelation.[1] His points, as far as they show that a high plane of conscious moral development cannot be the direct outcome of any particular kind of political situation or of any particular kind of mores, have much weight. He fails, however, to recognize the significance of reflection in the development of moral ideas. On the one side, Israel, in common with kindred tribes and, in fact, with all primitive peoples, had a morality of custom, limited, of course, but by no means of negative value. On the other side, there were the lofty conscious moral concepts of the prophets, regarded by them as having a universal validity. What is the relation, if any, of the one to the other? G. A. Smith apparently holds that there is a fundamental difference between them such as can only be explained by the hypothesis of a special revelation.

It should be noted, however, that the Hebrew prophets were not unique in attaining to a lofty moral outlook upon life. The Greek philosophers and some of their successors attained to concepts as high, even though they were somewhat different. But the Greeks developed their concepts abstractly into a

[1] *Preaching of the Old Testament*, pp. 138–141.

philosophy of morality, while the prophets were primarily practical religious teachers. Thus their contributions to reflective morality, were always expressed in terms of the national god, Yahweh.[1] It is not stranger that high-minded men should have appeared in Israel than in Greece, men who pondered upon the events of their times and drew certain conclusions regarding the worth of human life and human endeavor. The cases are not rendered different, as far as the ethical concepts are concerned, because the expression, on the one hand, was in terms of religion, and on the other, in terms of philosophy.

Shall it be maintained that some valuations of life have a natural history while some do not, that the evolution of honesty or of chastity may be traced, but that the notion of social justice, mercy, and love, as expressed in the absolute goodness of God, is so remote from complete realization in the experience of even the best of men that it must therefore have come to men out of all connection with experience, *i.e.* have been revealed? The assumption that there is such a fundamental difference between ethical values would be paradoxical if it were not so common. It is due in large measure to the method by which the problem is usually approached, or to the unanalyzed presuppositions which prevent a frank facing of the problem upon its own merits. For instance it is assumed that while the nature deity is *merely* the reflection of the vices of its worshippers, the god of righteousness is not related to any social process, and must first have been intellectually conceived as supremely good and just. But this, it is maintained, could never have been, because there was nothing in experience to furnish the basis for such a concept. This difficulty is altogether a logical one. The separation between finite and infinite goodness or love is not primarily due to an

[1] Cf. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 197.

attempt to describe two types of reality. It is merely an expedient by which we emphasize to ourselves the supreme significance of our actual efforts along the line of goodness, which, as far as realization is concerned, generally seem to fall far short of intention. The very tendency to put off in a different sphere our highest valuations is merely an aspect of the valuating process itself, and is no indication of an ultimate difference in metaphysical reality. In the same way we seem best able to satisfy ourselves that this act or this person is of very great significance in our lives by saying that it, or he, is absolutely unique. Such assertions are not usually to be taken as descriptions of reality, but only as attempts to symbolize the worthfulness which we feel inheres in the object of consideration. The same may be said of the various attributes with which the deity is usually clothed.

We hold, then, that the distinguishing characteristic of the religio-ethical ideas of the later Hebrew prophets is that they are the outcome of reflection upon contemporary social mores and traditional religious concepts. The difficulty with such an hypothesis, as over against the theory of revelation, is diminished if we but recognize, as we should, the positive value of this unreflective matrix of religion and customary morality with reference to the later development.[1] The reflective moralist does not spin a fabric out of thin air. His work is rather to meet the problems and the discrepancies which arise in the practical workings of customary morality, to determine the real worth involved and to reconstruct the situations so that this real worth may be more adequately realized. It will be important, then, for an understanding of the evolution of the higher ethical religions to note some of the specific ways in which positive elements are present in the non-reflective stages of religion. Note first of all that the concept

[1] Cf. E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 1st ed., Vol. I, pp. 26 f.

of a deity or deities, as such, is a positive factor in the moral life. It is frequently assumed that the deities of heathendom are non-ethical, reflecting simply the everyday social customs of their worshippers. In a measure this is true, but it is also true that, in so far as social custom, with its inevitable valuations, crystallizes into a deity, that deity *does* exert a controlling influence of some sort upon his worshippers. Even though the modes of worship and the manner of life associated with him be from every point of view debasing, it is, nevertheless, a *prescribed* system of conduct. As a matter of fact, the conduct so prescribed is *not* of necessity debasing. It is well known that the mores of many of the natural races of the present contain much that even the reflective moralist must look upon with admiration. A deity, then, who is really worshipped, is usually connected with the customary morality of his people, and in his character and will is to be found the sanction of these mores. There is no gap between the group with a debasing worship and one which has a high standard of tribal morality and a purer ritual. In both cases there is control of action in some more or less specific direction. The real problem is, then, that of determining the conditions which have given rise to certain ethical concepts and practices rather than the spurious problem of why, at a certain stage in the evolution of religion, there was a transition from low nature gods to a lofty ethical deity who hates evil and oppression and enjoins justice and purity of heart. Even the nature deity hates evil, *i.e.* is angered with those who do not properly comply with his ritual and the customs associated therewith.

In the same way conscience may be assumed to be present as one of the positive factors of moral progress in the religion of custom as well as in that of reflection. Conscience, on the lowest levels of religion, is psychologically identical with the conscience of higher religions. On the negative side, wher-

ever it is found, it is both the feeling and the intellectual recognition of uneasiness and even of sorrow which arises when one has violated an organized and admittedly valid aspect of himself. The psychical state is the same, whether this violated self be expressed altogether in the form of unreflective social customs or whether it be a subjective construction of the individual himself. In either case it is an instance of the inertia of habit. Boas tells of how an Eskimo refused to kill his aged mother at the beginning of a hard winter, an act dictated and approved by the mores of the tribes. His final action may be said to have been the resultant of a conflict between that part of himself expressed in tribal custom and that organized into parental love. In so far as the first of these aspects of himself was uppermost, he no doubt felt real qualms of conscience in refusing to kill his mother. In even the most highly developed religious types of the culture races, matters of conscience are largely matters of social custom.

The positive significance for higher religion of the content of the primitive religious consciousness is apparent in all the prophetic writings of the Hebrews. All such concepts as those of sin, holiness, faithfulness to Yahweh, have definite antecedents in the primitive Semitic social life. Take, for example, the notion of sin. It has frequently been urged that paganism and ethical monotheism here differ fundamentally. Among the primitive Semites, as with most natural races, a sin is a "blunder or dereliction, and the word is associated with others that indicate error, folly, or want of skill and insight." [1] In other words, it is definitely associated with the proper observance of social customs, and with due precautions in dealing with all persons, objects, and places suspected of being surcharged with mystic power. It is recognized that a person may unwittingly break a regulation of custom or that

[1] Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 102, 103.

he may, as in the case of Uzzah, instinctively or without premeditation put forth his hand and receive a deadly shock from a sacred object. Sin, as thus conceived, does not necessarily involve an offence against God, nor does it involve any reference to the conscience or to the intent of the sinner. Perhaps the conception of sin as merely a misfortune, held by the primitive Semites of to-day,[1] is fairly representative of the earliest form in which the idea of sin appears. But sin as unintentional infraction, and hence as misfortune, is not intrinsically different from moral guilt. The difference may be expressed in terms of the personality or self involved in the two types. On the one hand, the self is objective, and its organization is identical with the organization of the mores of the group. The self of each individual in the group is so completely expressed by the customs which obtain that none can conceive of himself as acting otherwise than in conformity to these customs, unless it be unwittingly. On the other hand, if a member of such a primitive group experiences a development of personality which does not find adequate expression in the faithful observance of social custom, he will become correspondingly able to conceive of himself as voluntarily acting along lines other than those laid down by custom. An infraction of the mores of his group will no longer be regarded as accidental, but as an incident to the attainment of some private aim. In proportion as the morality of custom is still regarded with respect, or as something which has yet an important place in his life, he will then experience real moral guilt in following out his individual purpose. If abstract moral law or divine commands take the place of the law of custom, we have a relatively subjective self substituted for the objective one above considered. Here, again, there may be such complete identification of the self

[1] Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion of To-day*, pp. 129, 130.

with the divine will that sin can be conceived only as accidental, or as a blunder. Here, also, moral guilt will be possible when the person begins to realize that he has real desires which lie counter to the divine will. The conception of sin as moral guilt is then one of the aspects of the differentiation of the self, and it may obtain in primitive as well as in ethical religions. The sense of sin, as it appeared in the prophets, was not different in kind, but only in degree, from that which might at any time have appeared in the popular religious consciousness of the times.

Nor was the conception of the holiness of Yahweh unrelated to the popular religion of Israel. As Robertson Smith points out,[1] it probably first appeared in connection with certain localities which, for various reasons, were regarded with dread or circumspection, that is, as the seat of some mysterious power. At a later time these sacred or holy places were regarded as the abodes of various spirits or deities. The fear or awe due to Yahweh as a holy god was thus but an extension of a concept quite familiar to all Semitic peoples.

The relation of Yahweh to Israel is worked out by the prophets very largely in the familiar terms of the relation of father to son, or of husband to wife. The notions of marital and filial fidelity must have had some place in the ordinary thought and conscience of the times, or the figure of the prophets could not have been understood by the hearers. As Barton points out,[2] the family relation occupied a most important place in primitive Semitic society. The relation of the people to its gods was frequently expressed, now in forms of fatherhood, now in terms of the matrimonial relation.[3]

The conception of the justness of Yahweh seems to be re-

[1] *The Religion of the Semites*, 1st ed., p. 149, *et seq.*
[2] *Semitic Origins*, pp. 306, 307.
[3] *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 167–175.

lated to the covenant idea. He had delivered Israel from Egypt and had brought them to a new land, in return for which service they agreed henceforth to serve him. The covenant with Yahweh was entirely analogous to those covenants common in ordinary social life. If the covenant is broken by one party, the other may, in all justice, be angered, and seek reparation. Thus the national misfortunes of Israel can easily be interpreted as evidences, not of Yahweh's weakness, but of his just wrath at the broken covenant. Faithfulness to Yahweh as the sole condition of prosperity was the fundamental message of the prophets. In what this faithfulness consists is naturally regarded differently by different ages, "according to the different tasks and dangers which each brings with it,"[1] and thus the reflective religious teachers of each age contributed something to the development of the character of the national god. Thus, we contend, his personality, by which he was distinguishable from other gods, was little by little built up, instead of being progressively revealed as a preëxisting and completed metaphysical substance.

If we were to follow out this inquiry, we should find that every distinguishing quality of the ethical conception of Yahweh as taught by the prophets is rooted in the framework of concepts and appreciations which had grown up in the social and religious life of primitive Israel. Neither on the side of mere monotheism nor of ethical character is there any psychological break. The transformation of the fluent psychological monotheism of popular religion into an absolute type, and the generalization of the moral values of experience and the statement of them in terms of the character of one deity is not a procedure unique in the history of reflective thought, although it may in this case have been carried further and have had more definite and practical consequences.

[1] Budde, *op. cit.*, pp. 101, 102.

But why, it may be asked, did not a similar development occur among other Semitic peoples? Even though we should be unable to give satisfactory reasons for this, it does not follow that we must deny to later Israelitish religion a thoroughgoing natural history.[1] We do not know completely the 'why' of any of the complex variations in plant and animal life, much less those which human life presents. Why did the Chinese develop their peculiar ethical system rather than some more fruitful type such as that worked out by the Greeks? What is the natural history of Socrates or of Plato, of Roman as over against Greek religion? In none of these cases can anything approaching a complete answer be given. In all our science, we must rest eventually upon the principle that our universe is one in which variation rather than uniformity is the rule, and further, that, if the antecedent conditions of some simpler variations seem to be more or less open to us, there is no reason for holding that the more striking variations must be put off by themselves in a separate universe. The difference between the religion of the Hebrew prophets and that of kindred Semitic peoples is simply the difference that everywhere presents itself in both animal life and in human society where related forms vary in diverse ways.

It is perhaps not necessary to say, in conclusion, that the *value* of the ethical monotheism of the Hebrews is not impugned by the attempt to work out its natural history. The question as to whether these concepts were valid or not can be answered only by reference to their influence upon the conduct of life, both in the time of the prophets and later.

[1] Cf. G. A. Smith, *Preaching of the Old Testament*, pp. 131 f., wherein it is argued that, since the social and political life of all the Semitic peoples was so much alike, the higher conceptions of Yahweh were of necessity revelations.

CHAPTER XI

RELIGION AND MORALS — WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE AUSTRALIANS

I

It would be suggestive in many ways to take up the problem of the relation of religion to morals from the view-point presented in the studies which have preceded.[1] We shall, however, discuss here only one small phase of it, illustrating the point in some detail from the moral status of one primitive race, the aborigines of Australia.

Our view of the religious consciousness, as built up through social custom and enriched through social intercourse, suggests a relationship between religion and morality that has not been sufficiently recognized in many treatments of the subject. Morality, as its etymology suggests, refers also to the customary, and on this ground we may argue with much assurance for the view that primitive morals and primitive religion are but two sides of the same thing. In every social body it is desirable, and in fact necessary to its very continuance as such, that men should observe certain rules of conduct. "That men do, however imperfectly, conform to such rules . . . . is the extraordinary and almost miraculous result of habit and prejudice."[2] Religion, as a differentiated aspect of custom, has always been associated with conduct of one kind

[1] The author has amassed much material for a full treatment of this subject, but time does not permit of working it out for the present volume.

[2] G. Lowes Dickinson, *Religion, A Criticism and a Forecast.*

or another. It has not chosen habit as its ally, nor put itself behind a bulwark of emotional prejudice. In a broad, and not necessarily derogative sense, religion *is* these things. Certain habits of conduct are not, to start with, maintained by religion; they are rather religion in its most fundamental sense. Through them, as we have seen, religious valuations and the religious consciousness itself have been built up. This is the ground both of the power of religion over conduct and of the conservatism of religion. As long as society is more or less stationary, the type of conduct enjoined by religion is usually identical with that demanded by the moral consciousness. But in social bodies which have rapidly differentiated, the requirements of religion often fall far below the current social needs. It is not, however, our purpose to enter into the problem of why religion and morals may thus become dissociated, nor to trace all the subtle interconnections which persist even where there is more or less of a rupture between them. We wish, rather, to show that in primitive custom, the basis of the religious consciousness, there is a positive moral worth which may furnish the raw material for higher conceptions of conduct, and which have much significance for the natural history of morals as well as of religion.

II

According to the earlier explorers and missionaries and the careless travellers of even recent years, the morality of the Australian aborigines was of a very low grade. Almost all such observers agreed in placing them in the very lowest stages of culture. They were described as bestial in habits, naked, lacking all sense of virtue; the men cruel to their children and wives. They were said to be addicted to infanticide and cannibalism, were cruel in their tastes, shiftless, lazy,

stupid, deceitful; in fact, were possessed of all conceivable evil qualities; they were deaf to the lessons of religion and civilization, ready at theft, and had almost no regard for the value of human life. They were naturally, moreover, given up almost constantly to destructive intertribal wars.

The investigations of more recent students of the natural races have thrown a somewhat different light upon the matter. It is now recognized that morality is not to be judged by relationship to some fixed and absolute standard, but rather that it is fundamentally related to the system of social control which prevails within the group. It is consequently unjust to apply civilized standards of morality to such peoples. The goodness or badness of an act must be adjudged according to its place within some social context. It must, moreover, be borne in mind that the 'higher race,' in its first contact with the lower, seldom sees it at its best. Without doubt the ignorance and brutality of many of the first white settlers and explorers of Australia were constantly provocative of retaliation on the part of the natives. The so-called treachery of the latter, their cunning, and their dishonesty were merely reflexes of their treatment by the whites. Hence it is impossible to judge of the morals of a race by the acts produced by its contact with another race. It may be admitted that a savage will do many things that a civilized man would not do, but *mere* difference does not render either one or the other immoral. The morality of an act can be determined only when it is known whether it conforms to the standard recognized by the group. This does not, of course, preclude the further inquiry as to whether some social standards are relatively higher than others, but such an inquiry lies beyond the scope of the present chapter.

In the first place, then, the unfavorable light in which the Australian first appeared is to be explained partly by the

treatment he received from the whites and partly by the inability of the whites to understand him. Thus, the laziness of the native may be attributed merely to his inability to fall in with the enterprises of the settlers, or to appreciate the objects of their endeavor or their interests. In activities of their own the natives show the most surprising industry, for example, in the collection of food,[1] the preparation for and performance of their elaborate ceremonials. The observations which follow should not, however, be taken as applying to the Australian race as a whole, but only to the section directly observed, for there is no question but that there is much diversity in the customs and characteristics of different tribes and groups.

As to personal virtues, the natives of Queensland were said to be generally honest in their dealings with one another. Aside from murder of a member of the same tribe, they knew only one crime, that of theft. If a native made a 'find' of any kind, as a honey tree, and marked it, it was thereafter safe for him, as far as his own tribesmen were concerned, no matter for how long he left it.

The Australian native in general was and is possessed of fortitude in the endurance of suffering in a marked degree. There is abundant opportunity for the development of this quality of mind in the painful ordeals of initiation, a ceremony which is always accompanied by fasting and the infliction of bodily mutilations of various kinds, differing with the tribe and the locality. These mutilations include the knocking out of teeth, circumcision, subincision, and various scoriations of the trunk, face, and limbs. Among some of the tribes there are permanent food restrictions imposed by custom upon different classes. There are also food restrictions imposed upon the

[1] Henderson, John, *Excursions and Adventures in New South Wales*, London, 1851, p. 125.

youth and younger men, and all of these are faithfully complied with, although at considerable personal hardship.[1]

The food restrictions form such an important phase of aboriginal morality that they warrant further discussion. The following regulations of the Kurnai tribe are typical: A man of this tribe must give a certain part of his 'catch' of game, and that the best part, to his wife's father. Each able-bodied man is under definite obligation to supply certain others with food. There are also rules according to which game is divided among those hunting together. In the Mining tribe all those in a hunt share equally, both men and women. In all tribes certain varieties of food are forbidden to women, children, and uninitiated youths; there are also restrictions based upon the totem to which one belongs. The rules regarding the cutting up and cooking of food are as rigid as those regulating that of which the individual may lawfully partake. Howitt says of these food rules and other similar customs that they give us an entirely different impression of the aboriginal character from that usually held. Adherence to the rules of custom was a matter on which they were most conscientious. If forbidden food were eaten, even by chance, the offender has been known to pine away and shortly die. Contact with the whites has broken down much of this primitive tribal morality.

"The oft-repeated description of the black-fellow eating the white man's beef or mutton and throwing a bone to his wife, who sits behind him, in fear of a blow from his club, is partly the new order of things resulting from our civilization breaking down old rules." [2]

Under the influence of the food rules, a certain generosity

[1] Howitt, *Native Tribes of Southeast Australia*, London, 1905, p. 561; Fraser, John, *The Aborigines of New South Wales*, Sydney, 1892, p. 90.

[2] Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 684.

of character was fostered, and unquestionably it was present in the blacks to a marked degree. He was accustomed to share his food and possessions, as far as he had any, with his fellows.

"It may be, of course, objected to this that in so doing he is only following an old-established custom, the breaking of which would expose him to harsh treatment and to being looked upon as a churlish fellow. It will, however, hardly be denied that, as this custom expresses the idea that in this particular matter every one is supposed to act in a kindly way towards certain individuals, the very existence of such a custom . . . shows that the native is alive to the fact that an action which benefits some one else is worthy of being performed." [1]

The apparent absence of any excessive manifestations of appreciation or gratitude in the black-fellow has been interpreted by some adversely. But *giving*, as far as the natives were concerned, was such a fixed habit that gratitude did not seem to be expected. It does not necessarily follow that they could not feel gratitude because they did not show any sign of it to the white man when he bestowed upon them some paltry presents, for, as Spencer and Gillen point out, they might not feel that they had reason to be grateful to him who had encroached upon their water and game and yet did not permit them a like hunting of his own cattle.

Although as a rule perfectly nude, they are said to have been modest before contact with the whites.[2] Of the north Australians, we are told that the women were never indecent in gesture, their attitude being rather one of unconsciousness.[3]

[1] Spencer and Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 48.

[2] Lumholtz, Carl, *Among Cannibals*, N.Y., 1889, p. 345.

[3] Creed, J. M., "The position of the Australian aborigines in the scale of human intelligence," *The Nineteenth Century and After*, Vol. 57, 1905, p. 89.

The low regard for chastity reported by some observers may, in part, be explained by the failure of the outsider to understand their peculiar marriage customs, on account of which the relation of the sexes is to be judged by different criteria than with ourselves. Spencer and Gillen, the most recent and the most scientific of all who have studied this race, say of the central tribes that chastity is a term to be applied to the relation of one group to another rather than to the relation of individuals. Thus, men of one group have more or less free access to all the women of a certain other group. Within the rules prescribed by custom, breach of marital relations was severely punished. No one would think of having sexual relations with one in a class forbidden to himself or to those of his own class. It would thus appear that, within the bounds of their own customs, they were extremely upright. When, under certain conditions, chiefly ceremonial, wives were loaned, it was always to those belonging to the group within which the woman might lawfully marry.[1] Among the natives of north central Queensland a competent observer [2] holds that there is no evidence of the practice of masturbation or of prostitution. The camp as a body punished incest and promiscuity. Howitt, writing of the natives of southeastern Australia, says that the complicated marriage restrictions expressed in a very definite way their sense of proper tribal morality. Here, also, looseness of sexual relations was punished, although at certain times it was proper to exchange wives, and at other times there was unrestricted license among those who were permitted to marry.[3]

Of the treatment of wives and children there are conflicting reports, the more recent investigators holding that there was

[1] See also Cameron, *Journal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 14, p. 353.

[2] Roth, *Ethnological Studies among the Northwest Central Queensland Aborigines* (1897), p. 184.

[3] Fraser, *op. cit.*

less cruelty than was at first represented. There was, however, doubtless much difference in this respect in different tribes. One early observer [1] affirms that wives were always secured by force, the girl being seized from ambush, beaten until senseless, and thus carried off by her 'lover.' Others, in like manner, emphasize the brutality of obtaining wives.[2] Lumholtz says that stealing was and is the most common method. The researches of Spencer and Gillen do not confirm these statements as far as the natives of central Australia are concerned, while Roth refers to the commonness of the practice of stealing wives and eloping among the north central Queensland natives. According to Spencer and Gillen, wives may have been so secured, but such was assuredly not the customary method in central Australia, at least. They know of no instances of girls being beaten and dragged away by suitors. It is probable that cases of exceptional cruelty more easily came to the notice of the first travellers, and they inferred that such cases were characteristic. The last-named authors affirm that the method of securing wives among these tribes was definitely fixed by tribal usage and involved no cruel practices whatsoever. Howitt, the authority upon the southeastern tribes, says that cruelty was often practised upon elopers, but this is manifestly because they had themselves been guilty of breach of tribal morality. Looseness of sexual relations among these tribes originally always met with severe punishment.

As to treatment of wives among the central tribes,[3] there were undoubtedly cases of cruelty, but they were the exception rather than the rule. The savage husband has a hasty temper, and in a passion might act harshly, while at other times

[1] Earp, G. B., *Gold Colonies in Australia*, London, 1852, p. 127.

[2] Angas, G. F., *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*, London, 1850, p. 225.

[3] Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 51.

he might be quite considerate of his wife. Among the aborigines of the Darling River, New South Wales, quarrels between husband and wife were said to be quite rare,[1] and Smith says that love is not rare in Australian families, while another observer[2] says that the life of the women is hard, and that they are much abused by their husbands. Dawson, who wrote expressly to show that the Australian blacks had been misrepresented, maintained that in Victoria at least there was no want of affection between members of a family.[3] Lumholtz[4] holds that the Queensland husband felt little responsibility for his family, that he was really selfish, and hunted only for sport, often consuming the game as caught, bringing nothing home. The same author refers to one case of a wife being terribly beaten because she refused, one cold night, to go out and get fuel for the husband. Over against this testimony we have that of Spencer and Gillen, referred to above, that the husband was ordinarily by no means cruel. In hard seasons men and women suffered alike. A woman, however, suspected of breach of marital relations, was treated with revolting severity. They point out that many things which to us seem harsh were by no means so in their eyes, and that the savage woman recovers easily from wounds that to a civilized woman would entail the greatest suffering. Treatment which we should naturally think cruel was to them merely rough and in conformity with the rest of their life. Howitt[5] says that among the Kurnai tribe family duties were shared by husband and wife, each performing an allotted part

[1] Bonney, F., "The Aborigines of the river Darling," *Journal of Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 13, pp. 122 ff.

[2] Smyth, R. B., *Aborigines of Victoria*, and Palmer, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 13, pp. 302 ff.

[3] Dawson, J., *Australian Aborigines*, 1881, p. 37.

[4] Lumholtz, *op. cit.*, pp. 161 ff.

[5] *Op. cit.*, p. 738.

toward the support of the family. The man's duty was to fight and hunt, the woman's to build the home, catch the fish and cook them, gather vegetable foods, make baskets, bags, and nets.

With reference to their children, much affection was usually shown, and this in spite of the fact that abortion and infanticide were practised in many localities.[1] In this connection Howitt says, ". . . they [the Mining tribes] are very fond of their offspring and very indulgent to those they keep, rarely striking them," a mother often giving all the food she had to her children, going hungry herself. Infanticide was by no means so unrestricted, or as indicative of cruelty of nature and lack of parental affection as is implied by Mackenzie, writing in the year 1852.[2] Among the north central tribes [3] infanticide was practised, but only upon rare occasions, at any other time than immediately after birth, and when the mother thought she was unable to care for the babe. The killing of the new-born child was thus an effort at kindness on their part, and to them was certainly devoid of cruelty, since they believed the spirit part went back to the spot whence it came, and was subsequently born again to the same woman. Twins were killed as unnatural, a practice to be explained in part by the natives' dread of everything uncommon or rare. On infrequent occasions a young child of a few years was killed that an older but weaker child might eat it and thus get its strength. Howitt mentions the same practice among the southeastern natives.[4] He also says that in some places infants were eaten in especially hard summers. Sometimes, also, after the family consisted of three or four, all additional children were killed because they would

[1] *E.g.* in northwestern central Queensland, Roth, p. 183; and among the southeastern tribes, Howitt, pp. 748 ff.

[2] Vide *Ten Years in Australia*, p. 130.

[3] Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes*, p. 608.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 749.

make more work than the women could manage. Among the Kurnai, infanticide unquestionably arose through the difficulty of carrying a baby when there were other young children, some of whom might be unable to walk. Infants, under these circumstances, were simply left behind when they were on the march, it not being regarded as killing to dispose of them in this way.[1] Palmer,[2] writing of the natives of Queensland, says that the killing of a new-born child was lightly regarded, but not common. On the lower Flinders River the fondness of the natives for their children was noted. Spencer and Gillen say that, with rare exceptions, children were kindly and considerately treated, the men and women alike sharing the care of them on the march and seeing that they got their proper share of food. Howitt mentions the case of a mother watching a sick child, refusing all food, and, when it died, being inconsolable.[3] One woman for nineteen years carried about a deformed child on her back.[4] Natural affection was certainly keen, and much grief was manifested over the loss of children.

In the aborigines' treatment of the old and infirm most observers depict them in quite a favorable light. Dawson, it is true, reports that the natives of Victoria killed them, but this was certainly not a widely prevalent custom. Lumholtz[5] says that the Queenslanders were very considerate of all who were sick, old, or infirm, not killing them as with some savage peoples.[6] In northern parts of Australia there were many blind, and they were always well cared for by the tribe, being often the best fed and nourished.[7] In the central tribes the old and infirm were never allowed to starve. Each able-bodied adult was assigned certain of the older people to provide with

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 750. [2] *Op. cit.* [3] *Ibid.*, p. 766.
[4] Fraser, *op. cit.*, Henderson, *op. cit.*, p. 121. [5] *Op. cit.*, 183.
[6] Cf. Bonney, *op. cit.*, p. 135. [7] Creed, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

food, and the duty was fulfilled cheerfully and ungrudgingly.[1] In some tribes the old and sick were carried about on stretchers. In the Dalebura tribe a woman, a cripple from birth, was carried about by the tribes-people in turn until her death, at the age of sixty-six. On one occasion they rushed into a stream to save from drowning an old woman whose death would have been a relief even to herself. Fraser emphasizes the respect in which old age was held by the aborigines of New South Wales, and the fact that they never desert the sick.[2]

Cannibalism among the Australian blacks was by no means a promiscuous and regular practice, as was at first supposed. It is true, Lumholtz says of those observed by him, that human flesh was regarded as a great delicacy.[3] Palmer,[4] writing of Queensland also, says that cannibalism was practised to a certain extent, in some sections those killed in fights being eaten, and often children who had died. An early writer reports that in South Australia bodies of friends were eaten on their death as a token of regard.[5] Spencer and Gillen found difficulty in gathering evidence of its being practised among the central tribes. They were often told by one tribe that it was customary among others who lived farther on, they in turn saying the same thing of those beyond themselves. They think, in general, that human flesh was eaten as a matter of ceremony or at least for other than mere food reasons. They found much more evidence of it among the northern tribes. Howitt says the Dieri tribe practised cannibalism as a part of the burial ceremonies, that it was a sign of sorrow for the dead. Among others only enemies slain on their raids were eaten;

[1] Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes*, p. 32.

[2] Cf. Smith, *op. cit.*

[3] See also Bicknell, *Travel and Adventure in North Queensland*, London, 1895, p. 104, who holds it was quite common.

[4] *Op. cit.*

[5] Angas, p. 225; Fraser, p. 56, as a sign of regard or in ceremonial.

the Kurnai, for instance, would not eat one of their own tribe. Among still other tribes, if a man were killed at initiation ceremonies, he was eaten, as also any one killed in one of the ceremonial fights, and others again did *not* eat their enemies. Howitt is positive that there is no such thing among any thus far observed as propitiatory human sacrifice, and he denies emphatically the statement made current by some that sometimes a fat *gin* (woman) was killed to appease their craving for flesh when they chanced to have been long upon a vegetable diet. He also says that at the tribal meetings of the Bunya, men, women, and children, killed in fights or by accident, were eaten, but that there is no evidence that women and children were killed for cannibalistic purposes.

The morality of the Australian native was, in a word, the morality of tribal custom, and, if fidelity to duties so imposed may be taken as a criterion, it was of no low order. Recent investigators unite in testifying that the black-fellow, especially before contact with Europeans, was most scrupulous in his obedience to the sacred duties imposed upon him by tribal usage. Of the Queensland natives Roth says:[1] —

"The life of the tribe as a whole seemed to be well regulated. Custom, with the old men as its exponents, was the only law. Where there were few old men, each individual, within limits, could do as he pleased."

Howitt writes of the tribes studied by him that custom regulated the placing of huts in the camp, and even the proper position of individuals within the huts. In the Kaiabara tribe single men and women lived on opposite sides of the camp. The old women kept an ever-watchful eye upon the young people to prevent improprieties. In another tribe the women could not come to the camp by the same path as the men, a violation

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 139 ff.

of the rule being punishable by death. The law of custom thus controlled almost every phase of the life of the individual, including many personal matters as well as conduct toward others; the intercourse of the sexes is or was most definitely limited and regulated; the women who were eligible to each man in marriage were also rigidly determined by custom, as well as the proprieties of conduct toward the wife's family. Reference has already been made to the severe restrictions entailed by the initiation and other ceremonies, and also to the minute regulations regarding the choice of food. In all cases these customs were enforced by severe penalties. In some tribes the local group or camp united to punish any member who was guilty of overstepping these bounds as well as complicity in more serious crimes, such as incest, murder, or the promiscuous use of fighting implements within the camp. Most customs were, however, probably obeyed from habit, the native being educated from infancy in the belief that infraction of custom would produce many evils, such as premature grayness, pestilence, and even cosmic catastrophes. In fact, among the tribes observed by Howitt, authority was generally impersonal, though not always, for the headmen were often men of great personal ability and were greatly feared and respected by the rest of the tribe or group.[1]

Questions of right and wrong for the Australians seem to have centred chiefly about food restrictions, secrets relating to the tribal ceremonies, the sacred objects and wives. Moral precepts probably originated in association with the purely selfish idea of the older men to keep all the best things for themselves.[2] In this way at least may be explained many of the regulations regarding what the younger men might eat. So also as to marriage, for aside from restrictions as to totem and

[1] Howitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 296–300.

[2] Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes*, etc., p. 504.

class into which a man might marry, all the younger women were reserved by the old men, the less desirable ones, alone, being available to the young men. But, granting the selfish character of many of the rules, there was still a certain amount of morality which transcended anything of this sort. The old men in their leisure "instructed the younger ones in the laws of the tribe, impressing on them modesty of behavior and propriety of conduct . . . and pointing out to them the heinousness of incest." [1] The rigid duties of manhood centred especially in the ceremonies of the tribe. The obligations which these involved were regarded as extremely sacred and inviolate. "As he [the youth] grows older, he takes an increasing share in these [ceremonies], until finally this side of his life occupies by far the greater part of his thoughts." [2] He must continually show strength of character, ability to endure hardship, to keep secrets, and, in general, to break away from the frivolity of youth and all that savored of femininity. There were, among the central tribes, certain sacred things which were only gradually revealed by the older men, and if a young man showed little self-restraint and was given to foolish chattering, it might be many years before he learned all that was in store for him.

It is interesting to learn that under the traditional régime the Australian natives lived a harmonious and certainly far from unhappy life. Fraser says they were a merry race.[3] Howitt, who was instrumental in gathering together the Kurnai tribe for the revival of their initiation ceremonies some years ago, reports that the people lived for a week in the manner of their old lives, and that the time passed without a single quarrel or dispute.[4] In their wild state the Dalebra tribe were noted to have lived most peaceably; *e.g.* a camp of three hundred is known to have continued for three months without

[1] Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 300.
[2] Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 43.
[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 777.

a quarrel. Their method of settling disputes was usually by means of a fight between the parties who were at odds. When blood was drawn, the fighting ceased, and all were henceforth good friends.[1] They were generous in fighting, taking no unfair advantage. They loved ease, and were not quarrelsome, but were nevertheless ready to fight.[2] Mortal wounds in such conflicts were rare.[3] Spencer and Gillen likewise say of the central tribes that whenever compensation in any form had been made by an offending party, the matter was ended and no ill-will was cherished.[4]

In some tribes theft was regarded as the greatest crime, aside from the murder of a fellow-tribesman. As there was so little private property, however, crimes arising from this source were rare. The stealing of women is said to have been the most common cause of intertribal trouble.[5] There were no fights for superiority, no suppression of one tribe by another. Within the tribe there was, in large measure, absolute equality. There were no rich or poor, age being the only quality that gave preëminence.[6] The intertribal fights were certainly not so serious as some have represented. That they were constantly attacking and trying to exterminate one another is not confirmed by those who have known them best. Their fights were probably half ceremonial or of a sportive character, and they were usually stopped when blood flowed freely.

They undoubtedly did fear strangers, and a man from a strange tribe, unless accredited as a sacred messenger, would be speared at once.[7] On the other hand, delegations from distant tribes were received and treated with the utmost kind-

[1] Dawson, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
[2] Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
[3] Lumholtz, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 31.
[5] Lumholtz, p. 126; Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes*, p. 31.
[6] Semon, R., *In the Australian Bush*, London, 1898, p. 225.
[7] Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes*, p. 31.

ness if they came in the recognized way. They were even permitted to take a prominent part in the ceremonies of their hosts.

The relations subsisting between members of the same tribe or group were, according to Spencer and Gillen, marked by consideration and kindness. There were occasional acts of cruelty, but most of them can be attributed to something else than a harshness of character. Thus, much cruelty resulted from their belief in magic.[1] The revolting ceremonies practised at initiation were all matters of ancient tribal custom, and hence cast little reflection upon the real disposition of the native.

All things considered, we are obliged to say that their life was moral in a high degree, when judged by their own social standards, and not even according to our standards are they to be regarded as altogether wanting in the higher attributes of character. Dawson holds that, aside from their low regard for human life, they compared favorably with Europeans on all points of morality. Howitt says:[2] —

"All those who have had to do with the native race in its primitive state will agree with me that there are men in the tribes who have tried to live up to the standard of tribal morality, and who were faithful friends and true to their word; in fact, men for whom, although savages, one must feel a kindly respect. Such men are not to be found in the later generation."[3]

III

This evidence as to the moral status of the Australian aborigines is of particular interest because they have

[1] *Native Tribes*, p. 48. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 639.

[3] As many of the accounts refer to tribes, or at least to customs, which are practically extinct, it seems best to use the past tense consistently throughout.

usually been classed as the lowest of savage races. These facts have not been presented with a view to proving that they may lay claim to a higher station, but rather to show how primitive are the beginnings of those types of excellence characteristic of the higher stages of religion and morals. These unreflective types of behavior, upon many of which we can look only with admiration, are the raw material of reflective ethics as well as the basis upon which those higher conceptions of conduct sanctioned by religion are constructed. In fact, it is safe to say that, in the case of religion at least, the love of justice, mercy, and human kindliness in general would never have developed as the expression of the will of a deity except as they appeared in the social relations of human life. As we have pointed out in another chapter, much of the difficulty experienced by many people in conceiving of an evolution of the higher ethical religions has been due to the fact that they have never taken into account the positive value of much that may be found in the customary life of primitive groups.

The life of the Australians contains many admirable qualities, and perhaps, as a whole, it is best adapted to the sum total of conditions under which these people lived before contact with the white race. We must say this even of the practice of cannibalism and of the rules regarding marriage and the general relation of the sexes, customs so abhorrent to the ethical sensibilities of the white race. Of course we must admit that many of these practices are incompatible with that type of social life that has developed among ourselves. But that they were degrading, and hence evil for the Australians, is a proposition not so easily disposed of.

It is to be noted, however, that in the case of some races this primitive *ethos* has been transferred to new conditions and to types of social life changed in many respects from that

in which the customs took their rise. The incompatibility of the old and the new produces, in time, the reflective moralist, who attempts a reconstruction of old values to suit new conditions. But religion, just because it is unreflective and because its valuations are intimately associated with these same ancient customs, tends to cling to them more tenaciously. Hence we have frequently the extraordinary condition of low types of conduct condemned by moral teachers, but persisting and sanctioned by religion.

As we have said, however, the fact that higher religions have, in the main, come to a consciousness of higher types of behavior, is in large measure dependent upon the actual presence in primitive *ethos* of all the fundamental human virtues.

CHAPTER XII

APPARENT RELATION OF RELIGION TO THE PATHOLOGICAL IN MENTAL LIFE

In the previous chapters of this book our attention has been concentrated in the main upon the method by which religious types of valuation and religious concepts have been built up in men's minds. We have had little to say of these values and concepts as mere mental states, nor have we considered their status in the general mental economy; to certain phases of this problem we shall now turn.

Many recent writers on the psychology of religion have laid so much stress upon relatively pathological phenomena as to suggest that the religious consciousness is more or less intrinsically psychopathic. James, near the close of his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, a volume devoted largely to unusual if not pathological types of religion (because, as he says, such varieties of religion may be expected to throw valuable light upon the more usual types, p. 22), suggests that in experiences of this type may be the very essence of religion. "We cannot," in his words, "avoid the conclusion that in religion we have a department of human nature with unusually close relations to the transmarginal or subliminal region." This region is "the fountainhead of much that feeds our religion. In persons deep in the religious life, as we have now abundantly seen, and this is my conclusion, the door into this region seems unusually wide open; at any rate, experiences, making their entrance through that door, have had emphatic influence in shaping religious history."[1] It is this

[1] *Varieties*, etc., pp. 483, 484.

apparent relationship between religion and the unusual, or even pathological, phases of mental and motor processes, that we wish to examine in this chapter.

The problem is beset with many difficulties. Upon the one hand, there is the great complexity of the religious attitude itself and the absolute impossibility of giving it any definite delimitations. Upon the other hand, the line of demarcation between the normal and the pathological can never be drawn except approximately. At best it is a shifting one. In the case of certain supposedly pathological mental phenomena, we must ever be uncertain whether they may not be really the manifestations of a healthful mind, and whether it may not be our own view that is perverted or partial.

In human society generally, the individual who varies widely in physical appearance, actions, ideas, or morals from what is customary in his social group is almost inevitably regarded as pathological. So he *may* be, but there is always the possibility that he may be a quite healthful variation. The early prophets of Israel, for instance, were probably persons distinguished by unusual if not abnormal experiences. In all likelihood their importance in the eyes of their contemporaries was due more largely to their strange aberrations than to any important messages they were able to deliver. In the case of the later prophets, the strange, ecstatic experiences persisted in all likelihood to some extent, but the messages they delivered were by far the most important contribution to the life of their times, and yet, even so, they were regarded as essentially 'possessed' persons, as fools, or as insane. Now this reputation for mental deviation was certainly not due merely to their occasional visions or other unusual experiences; it was probably in much larger measure due to the fact that their teaching departed so widely from accepted usages and beliefs. Thus we must not regard a

man as actually pathological, in the sense of being diseased mentally, because he is so regarded by his contemporaries.

There is still another difficulty to a satisfactory consideration of this subject that should be noted, and that is the general tendency for all people to consider those experiences as pathological which cannot be clearly defined in intellectual terms. The emotional side of experience cannot be so defined, and in some of its intenser phases it departs so far from anything that can be accurately described in the categories of ordinary experience, that it is assumed to be pathological. Thus the experiences of the mystic, his ecstasies and exaltations, are no doubt very difficult to describe in ordinary direct language. There is a richness of meaning and a fulness of reality about them that defies description, and the mystic, almost inevitably, drops into some sort of symbolism which seems so extravagant to the ordinary man that he at once brands the expressions as those of an unbalanced mind.[1]

Nevertheless, although there are no criteria of the pathological that can be regarded as final, there are many psychical and motor processes that are at least out of the ordinary, and some of them may with all propriety be called evidences of a diseased personality. It would perhaps be better to state the problem of this chapter as that of determining the extent to which the religious attitude is necessarily productive of, or related to, unusual experiences and unusual motor activities. When the term "pathological" is used, it will have the broad connotation of the unusual, and we shall not feel that it is necessary to commit ourselves on the point of whether the phenomenon in question is actually the product of diseased conditions or not.

In all types of religion, from the crudest to the most refined

[1] Cf. Frank Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, and Rufus Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, London, 1909, Introduction.

and spiritual, we find an abundance of these unusual mental and motor phenomena. In one form or another they will be familiar to all who read these pages, and they need not, therefore, be enumerated or classified here at any length. Almost all religions symbolize their values, as we have seen, in terms of higher powers of some sort. These symbols are, in almost every case, taken by those who feel these values to be descriptions of reality on a par with the ordinary concepts which we apply to the physical world. That is, the spirit or deity is thought to *exist* in just the same way as the desk at which I sit exists, and just as physical objects can, under certain conditions, coöperate to produce striking occurrences of various kinds, so the beings and forces symbolizing the values of the religious consciousness are supposed to be capable of doing various things beyond the power of man and at variance with the way things ordinarily happen. Now the particular point we wish to make here is that the unusual, if not pathological, phenomena to which all religions can point are regarded by them as the evidences and proofs of the reality or validity of the system of values which each has built up.

In the cruder levels of culture, dreams, visions, and ecstatic experiences are almost always given a religious meaning or in some way play into the current type of religious concepts. Nor have higher religions been free from such interpretations.[1] At various times and among almost every people the sexual passions and the love of cruelty have been given full license under the sanction of religion. It is not merely in primitive phallic religions that sexuality has played its part. It has appeared throughout the history of religion down unto the very present, as witness the spiritual marriages of the Mormons and other sects, or the open teaching of free love of

[1] Cf. G. B. Cutten, *The Psychological Phenomena of Christianity*, Chaps. IV, VI, VII.

still other modern religious groups. But phenomena of the sort referred to in this paragraph have been so fully discussed by other writers that we need not take them up again, and indeed we have nothing to add to the very acute psychological analysis of such experiences and manifestations as have been made by others.[1] For the same reasons we shall not here attempt to discuss the mystic, with his divine revelations, his visions, auditions, exaltations, penances, all of which have been an important figure in the history of religion.[2] We shall also pass by the consideration of the waves of religious persecution, and the religious manias, of which there have been almost every conceivable type, such as the crusades and the crucifixion sects (prominent in Europe in even the nineteenth century, whose adherents thought that religious perfection could be obtained only by imitating every detail in the reputed life of Christ, even to the extent of dying nailed to a cross. Stoll, *op. cit.*). Neither can we here discuss the varied phenomena of camp-meeting and revival, all of which have been fully treated by others.[3] All of these matters form a large and distinct phase of religious expression, and they require a separate treatment under the pathology of re-

[1] See interesting illustrations in Stoll's *Suggestion und Hypnotismus in der Völkerpsychologie*, Cutten, *op. cit.*, Chap. XXIX, "Sexuality," Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, Chap. VI, "The Scotch-Irish revival in Kentucky in 1800," *et seq.* Also the *Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, Vol. III, "Religion and sensualism as connected by clergymen," T. Schroeder.

[2] For a sympathetic and yet acute discussion of Mysticism, James, *op. cit.*, is of course unsurpassed. Other discussions which attempt to analyze the mystical experience more minutely and most suggestively are: "Tendances fundamentales des mystiques chrétiens," *Revue Philosophique*, Vol. LIV (1902), pp. 1–36; 441–487; Murisier, *Les maladies du sentiment religieux*, Paris, 1901; Delacroix, *Études d'histoire et de psychologie du mysticism*, Paris, 1908; Granger, *Soul of the Christian*, is also suggestive; Rufus Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, especially the Introduction.

[3] *E.g.* Davenport, *op. cit.*

ligion. So much has been written upon them that we may quite properly confine ourselves entirely to the question of the significance of such phenomena (granting that they have existed and do exist) for the development of religious values, or possibly first of all to the question of why so many excesses of this sort have constantly appeared in connection with the development of the religious valuational consciousness.

It will be objected, no doubt, that many of the occurrences cited are not the expressions of genuine religion. It is not, however, in the province of psychology, or of any science, for that matter, to establish norms of religious genuineness. As far as psychology is concerned, all religions are genuine, and all the extravagances that might be mentioned are real expressions of actual types of the religious attitude. Of course, if the religious attitude is taken as something separate and apart from the rest of the human consciousness, a special faculty for perceiving and adjusting one's self to a divine order of existence, then all these things are either perversions or besmirchings of its purity by external agencies. If, however, the religious attitude may be properly described as an organization of those elements of personality with reference to the fuller appreciation of certain values which develop within the experience of that person, it must always be considered as definitely related to the rest of the manifestations of personality, not *colored* by them, but *one* of them; one of the modes, among others, by which the person expresses himself. The expressions which a person makes of himself, the values which he seems to have developed in his life, may seem quite crude according to the standard which another person supposes to be absolute. But the crudity is simply that of the rest of the person's experience. The values one feels are the values of his *own* experience. It will never be proper to refer to

them as *merely* approximations of the values of a broader or supposedly absolute experience.

When, therefore, a doubt is raised as to whether a particular extravagance is related to genuine religion or not, it is sufficient to answer that, at any rate, it has occurred under the sanction of something that professed to be religion, and that it is not possible to classify the expressions of religion as true and false, although we may say that some religious valuations are higher than others. If there is any fairly constant quality that belongs to the religious attitude, as it has appeared at different times and among different people, it would seem that there must be something about it that tends, other conditions favoring, to produce just such unusual if not pathological mental and motor phenomena. In fine, it is not legitimate to attribute all of religion's questionable concomitants to some outside force such as the devil. In some of the great revivals of the past, when unusual manifestations were rampant, these were interpreted at first as the natural evidences of the power of God working upon men. When, however, the manifestations became excessive and grotesque, it was said that Satan had stepped in and was imitating the work of grace to discredit it. "It was originally wholly from God; it is now partly so still, but Satan is now responsible for a share — in Leslie Stephen's phrase of comment — 'a singular coöperation between God and the devil.'" [1]

To return to our problem, then, is there anything in the nature of the religious attitude itself, with all its protean forms, which has tended to foster unusual mental and motor phenomena or which has in some way laid the religionist open to possibilities of the sort? And finally, is this aspect of religion *mere* pathology, or has it con-

[1] Davenport, *op. cit.*, pp. 174 f.; quotation from L. Stephen, *Journal*, Vol. II, p. 49.

tributed in any positive way to the development of higher types of religious valuation?

As regards the first question,[1] there are two aspects of the attitude we are considering that may conceivably be productive of unusual experiences: first, the nature of religious values themselves; and secondly, the hypothesis of some sort of supernaturalism which is usually associated with religious valuation.

The very fact that religion deals with values that are to be appreciated rather than logically formulated, and the very fact that these values represent either the individual's or the social group's conception of its most vital needs and its ultimate well-being, whether in the present or in the future, causes them to become powerful excitants of the imagination and of the emotions. Æsthetic values, which, may often be associated with the religious, have an analogous but usually less powerful influence, partly because they are not associated in any intimate way with one's ultimate well-being, and partly because they lack the powerful reënforcement of social suggestion. Religious values are, as we have seen, essentially social products, and they usually come most vividly to consciousness in a social *milieu* of some sort. The curious experiences and the almost incredible motor automatisms of those who celebrate religious festivals and dances, or which are common among those who gather at revivals and camp-meetings, simply to mention a few typical social situations, are all illustrations of the extent to which mutual suggestion exercised by the members of a group may augment, if not actually produce, intense reactions to the valuations proposed by religion. Given, then, valuations of life and concepts of the religious type, and given a social group whose members are conscious of these things with varying intensity, and we have the conditions for

[1] The second question will be discussed in the latter part of this chapter.

experiences and reactions that may easily attain a degree of intensity which will render them pathological.

It was stated above that the hypothesis in most religions of some sort of supernaturalism has been a *second* cause of the frequent occurrence of unusual manifestations. In the preceding chapters the place of social activities of various kinds in the building up of religious valuations has been so much emphasized that it may not be entirely clear how supernaturalism is related to the process. A slight digression will therefore be necessary in order to clear the way for what we wish to present next.

Religious values and needs are, as we have seen, a possible outcome of the various processes of social activity which are aroused by all sorts of objects of general interest and concern. These objects may be economic. Thus, in those regions where the procuring of food is necessarily accompanied with some foresight and effort, that process, in all its details, tends to excite the attention of the group as a body. Times of seeding and harvest are naturally important in some regions, and the emotional stress of such periods[1] will be great in proportion as much uncertainty attends the results and in proportion as failure means disaster to the group. We have given illustrations of the large numbers of accessory activities which may originate in such times of anxious attention, acts which express the intensity of the feeling and actually serve to increase this feeling. Thus, it may be truly said that these relatively spontaneous and unevaluated social reactions, whether they be practical or accessory, that is, the result of mere emotional overflow, give the object of attention individuality and importance and build up about it systems of conscious appreciations. Among other occasions which naturally

[1] Cf. the elaborate ceremonies attending the planting and harvesting of the rice crop among the Malays, Skeat, *Malay Magic*.

interest primitive social communities are those of birth, the attainment of maturity, marriage, and death. So also with physical objects of unusual size or shape, or such as possess dangerous qualities. In all cases it should be borne in mind that the occasion which excites attention, *i.e.* the strange and unusual object or phenomenon, is *first* recognized because it seems to have a close connection with some of the already existing activities of the individual or of the group. Thus a certain South African tribe saw a large and otherwise remarkable rock in the vicinity at the time of their winning an unexpected victory over a much-feared enemy. They at once concluded that the rock contained a 'power,' or spirit, of some sort, and it became for them, henceforth, an object of worship. If the course of events had presented nothing out of the ordinary, it is more than likely that the stone would have remained unnoticed. It is often said that for the savage the idea of the supernatural has its rise in that which appears to him in some way unusual. Whatever occurs regularly does not ordinarily excite his attention. Thus, in most cases, it is not the regular rising and setting of the sun, but the eclipse that is an evidence of some superior power. This is all true, but it is important to remember that these things attract the savage because of the part they appear to play in something he is occupied in doing.

Primitive man's first concern is not, then, with supernatural powers, but with the *doing* of certain things, and the concept of a force beyond himself enters his mind in connection with the unexpected thwarting or furthering of his active interests. It does not develop as a separate object of interest, but rather as a possible phase or element in all his interests. It will therefore play a part in determining the development of his systems of activity in the various situations of life which concern him and upon the basis of which his religious conscious-

ness is built up. In this way, then, the concept of superior or supernatural powers becomes a factor in the development of religious values.

From the account we have given, it may be seen that these values are not, as they are often seemingly represented, mere detached states of adoration or of fear aroused by a general sense of mystery in nature; they have a definite background of social activity which has itself been the condition of man's first noticing unusual things and the condition of his supposition of a power superior to his own. So much, then, for the development of this concept and its connection with religion.

Now, among the various performances, both individual and collective, which are excited in connection with the different objects and occasions mentioned above, there are *some* acts which are more or less pathological, or at least unusual. These acts or experiences are not induced in people by priests or rulers in order to retain their power over them. *All* people, under appropriate conditions, are more or less subject to them. Possibly primitive man was more suggestible than modern man, more easily thrown into abnormal mental conditions.[1] The conditions of his existence were quite precarious, and he probably never attained entire emotional stability. Many of the forms of social activity within the primitive group, as dancing, or other mimes, we know from observation of natural races of to-day, are frequently productive of trances and ecstatic states with accompanying motor automatisms which have a startling effect upon the mind of the savage. All such strange occurrences as these just mentioned, as well as visions and dreams, the speaking with tongues, and the hearing of voices, are readily interpreted by him as incursions of some higher power into the customary

[1] Davenport takes this view; cf. *Primitive Traits*, etc., Chap. I.

order of his life. It is in this way that these pathological phenomena acquire a religious significance and become incorporated in the recognized religious activities of the group. Just because they occur in connection with the things the group is interested in doing do they attract attention and acquire religious meanings. Because they have these meanings they are sought after and cultivated, that is to say, one of the objects of religious activity is to get into *rapport* with this 'power' which shows itself in a person who has an unusual experience.

No phase of human thought has prevailed more widely or has been more persistent than that concerning spirits and spirit activity.[1] Taking its rise in the wonder of the savage in the presence of occurrences which seemed to concern him, and which he yet knew not how to explain, it has developed with a momentum of its own into a sort of world philosophy, appearing, with variations, in all ages and in all grades of culture. As we have suggested, whether it postulates merely a semi-mechanical force such as *manitou* or *wakonda*, a force working in and through natural objects, and yet in some way separable from them, or whether it presumes definite and individualized spirit beings or even deities, this quasi-philosophy tends to accentuate, if not actually to produce in men, unusual and perhaps pathological conditions of consciousness and behavior. The 'power,' spirit, or god is something essentially mysterious, something incapable of being definitely reckoned with. It is a means through which things that transcend ordinary or natural human powers may be brought to pass. It is thus associated in a peculiar

[1] *Vide* Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, which treats exhaustively this primitive belief in all its phases. It is possible that part of what Tylor treats as spiritism may be really phases of the vague belief in a mystic potency. See the earlier chapter upon this subject.

way with the projective aspects of experience.[1] Inasmuch as the supernatural power, however it be conceived, is felt to be a very real, though relatively indeterminate, quantity, with great influence for both good and ill, its capacity to excite the imagination, to stir up the emotions, and set going all sorts of activities is well-nigh unlimited. If a person believes he has been in *rapport* with it when in a state of unusual mental excitation, he will naturally tend to cultivate such states in order to realize more fully those life-values which religion has built up for him, and which have become associated with the manifestation of higher powers. Thus we have the Algonkin Indian boy going into the woods alone to fast until he shall obtain a vision of his *manitou;* thus also the bands of early Hebrew prophets, as well as similar persons of other peoples, worked themselves into a frenzied state through music and dancing, in order that they might communicate with Yahweh. Likewise the mediæval Christian ascetic, through fasting and self-inflicted tortures of the most refined type, sought a vision, or an ecstatic state, or an experience even of a voluptuous sort through that close contact with God he supposed he thus attained. Likewise the modern Protestant revivalist or other devotee seeks by much concentration of thought and vehemence in prayer to obtain the communion or assistance of a supernatural potency, the Holy Spirit. In all such cases, and others as well, that might be mentioned, the motives and ends of the seekers *may* well be of the highest character, but they, one and all, attempt to accomplish them under what may be called the inevitable spell of a primitive philosophy or a naïve mode of thought. One and all have in some form the notion of superior powers of some sort that may have great influence in determining man's well-being

[1] For an explanation and discussion of this point the reader is referred to page 276, Chapter X, "The problem of monotheism," etc.

either now or hereafter. In one form or another, all believe what is of everyday occurrence is in some way insignificant or trivial or without ultimate value for life, while what is unusual, exceptional, or transcending known laws is of much significance and possibly of the highest value.

In comment upon these things, we may say that the religious attitude, which expresses in a way the fervor, the aspiration of the human mind, may find embodiment in some sort of supernaturalism, but the supernaturalism is not the cause of the attitude, nor can it be used to prove its validity. It is merely a symbol, which becomes something crass and even absurd when it is offered as a proof of the aspiration it symbolizes. The occurrences which, to the savage mind, are evidences of the reality of superior powers have little by little been found to fit into the natural order of things, and it is the same with all the strange experiences of the religious mind even to this day. The only conclusion is that if religious values depend absolutely upon the reality of a supernatural so conceived, those values must soon cease to exist for many well-informed persons.

We have now arrived at the point where we may profitably discuss the place as well as the limitation of the so-called subconscious factors in the religious consciousness. As James points out, in the passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter, for the religious mind, the door into the subliminal regions of the mind seems to be more or less ajar. The striking experiences of the religious consciousness of all ages are shown in these studies of James to be largely the outcome of unusual subconscious activity. Primitive man, as we have seen, not being acquainted with the theory of the subliminal, regarded them as the manifestations of superior powers of some sort. And James, as is well known, suggests that this aspect of mental process may really open the mind

to powers above ourselves, thus apparently lending the weight of modern psychology to the primitive conception of the relation of the human to the divine.

It is not our purpose, nor is it necessary, to enter here into a criticism of this hypothesis.[1] We wish merely to get the setting of the idea. It appears, as we say, under the guise of modern science, to be identical with the primitive notion that whatever is unusual is caused by supernatural forces. Now, while all the presuppositions of science are against the savage view, and while modern psychology claims to be able to account for all these strange happenings without recourse to forces outside of nature, we need not here be dogmatic in our assertions for or against, for our particular problem lies in another direction. There are two related questions which have not, to our knowledge, received adequate consideration thus far. The first: Even though modern psychology takes the stand here attributed to it, does the religious consciousness nevertheless require the hypothesis of the supernatural in this traditional form? Can its valuations of life be sustained except on the basis of some such intercourse with beings and powers of a higher order than ourselves? Second: What is the place and meaning of the so-called subconscious or subliminal regions of the mind in the development of religious valuations? The first of these questions can best be treated in a chapter by itself.[2] The second properly forms the conclusion of the topic here under discussion.

What, then, is the psychological mechanism of religious

[1] A number of elaborate and trenchant criticisms have been made from different points of view. Perhaps the best and most succinct is that of J. H. Leuba, *International Journal of Ethics*, April, 1904, pp. 323–339. See also a valuable article "The sources of the mystical revelation," George A. Coe, *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. VI (1908), pp. 359–372.

[2] *Vide* Chapter XIII, *infra.*

valuation? To what extent is some particular type of mental activity especially concerned in its development? May we say, while we deny for the time being any such thing as supernatural visitation, that it is nevertheless true that the person who is in an intoxicated or ecstatic condition has any peculiar insight into the meanings and values of life? These questions can be answered only upon the basis of the organization and function of mentality, as we know it, in the general economy of life. The account which follows may be inadequate or untrue, but *some* account we must have before we can pass judgment upon the significance of unusual or pathological experiences in the development of religious valuation.

If the concept of evolution, as developed in biology, may be extended to apply to the development of mind as well, it is almost inevitable that we should conceive of mentality as appearing in the life-series in connection with the necessity of making more complicated adjustments to the environment or perishing in the struggle for existence. Manifestly the ability to sense mechanical or etheric vibrations of various kinds will be decidedly useful to any form of life. So also the capacity to perceive an object as a definite thing with a definite meaning, to recall past experiences with reference to present needs, to concentrate or focalize one's energies in an act of attention, to compare, to judge, to reason, to feel values, to retain past experiences in the form of useful habits, all of these things, it goes without saying, are more or less useful in the life struggle and have probably evolved in connection with it.[1]

Now, these phases of mental activity do not normally occur in isolation or unconnected with others, but organized in reactive systems of various sorts. They are each of them somewhat arbitrarily isolable phases of the process by which

[1] Cf. Hobhouse, *Mind in Evolution*, Chap. I.

a complicated organism may grapple with its environment; each phase involves the others, and contributes in some way to the organism's reaction. Thus, memory is necessary to reason and to the organization of mental processes known as attention, and in all of these operations, moreover, there is usually some appreciation or feeling of worthfulness or the opposite. Every moment of a person's life may be described broadly as a reaction to some phase of his world. These reactions differ greatly from moment to moment, both in object and in intensity, but one and all they are more or less definite organizations of the person to some aspect of his environment.

It is further to be noted that all such terms as "truth" or "value" develop in connection with this reactive experience.[1] It would appear from this that there are neither different kinds of truth nor different avenues for the perception of it. The *whole psychophysical organism* is a mechanism for the apprehension of the true and for the appreciation of its values. We need not, then, inquire which *part* of this organism is most effective in directing action in the practical world, or which furnishes the key to scientific truth, or which is most valuable for discerning the things of the spirit, but rather how they all work together to produce now this result, now that. From this point of view, also, that is true which 'works,' as far as it can be tested in some more or less complicated aspect of life's struggle. The more complex the struggle, the more difficult it becomes to be sure of the ultimate validity of the element in question. It is the same of values. Value is but one side of the true. The true is valid because it works, but it appeals to us as worthful because it seems to us to be something in which we can live and move, something in which we can really work out our innate impulse to be doing something.

[1] Cf. W. James, *Pragmatism, a New Name for some Old Ways of Thinking*, New York, 1907.

So much, then, for the general concept of the mind as an organized system of activities for the apprehension of the true and the appreciation of values. What account shall be taken of the so-called subconscious in this process?

As is well known, modern psychology has greatly enlarged our notion of the extent and content of the individual mind. In a given reaction to the world there are always many more factors operative than can be said to be present in consciousness. We are all possessed of a large background of habit and instinct which continually exerts some sort of influence upon our conduct. So, also, there are all sorts of shadows, as it were, of past experiences, ideas, relationships, percepts, valuations, probably in the form of mere neural dispositions, lying behind all conscious activity and inevitably contributing something to its organization and furthering it in some way. Some psychologists give to this subliminal region a dim consciousness, and regard it as more or less detached from the ordinary conscious life and possessed of peculiar powers. This view has with great justice been drastically criticised by others.[1] But it will not be necessary here to enter into any controversy over the matter. The essential point is that there are always regions beyond the point of attention, or the organized centre of the reaction, which contribute in some way to its movement.

As the reaction of the individual changes from moment to moment, different aspects of these outlying regions acquire prominence; in fact, what is at the centre of consciousness at one time, may at another be at the margin, or in the subliminal region, while what was before subliminal may now be uppermost. There is, in fact, no aspect of the personality

[1] Cf. the able article by A. H. Pierce, "An appeal from the prevailing notion of a detached subconsciousness," in the Garman volume of commemorative *Studies in Philosophy and Psychology*.

that can be definitely and permanently set off in a world of its own, possessed of peculiar powers or with extraordinary capacities for apprehending truth or a particular kind of truth. From the evolutionary point of view, the subliminal may be regarded, in part at least, as the matrix out of which definite conscious states arise. Its content, as far as it is conscious at all, may be thought of as mere undefined feeling. In an individual of developed personality it embraces all that is not present at the centre of attention. Habit, in the broad sense of the term, includes much that goes to make up the subliminal. It may be said that here also, in the main, are the values of the adjustments, individual and instinctive, hitherto worked out, in so far as they are elements of consciousness at all. The presence of this marginal region constantly affects the action at the centre, the centre, in fact, being simply the point in consciousness where the values of past experience are brought into most direct contact with the needs of the moment, or the point at which the subliminal portions of the mind are controlled and utilized. The passage from these outer regions to the centre is a passage from more or less incoherent and uncoördinated elements to the organized and controlled side of consciousness.

It is on this account, when the organization of conscious elements which characterizes the individual at ordinary times chances to disintegrate, that he is particularly open to suggestion. Hence the subconscious is sometimes referred to as the low-grade portion of the mind. Although this is only partially true, it would seem probable that the mind habitually under the domination of the subliminal would not ordinarily have a well-organized individuality and would be relatively low-grade. To maintain that *new* truth may be discovered by these outskirts of the mental life would seem little less than an absurdity, for it apparently contains nothing better than

a more or less refined sublimate of past experience and instinct, and the deliverance from it may be a gleaning from the grossest instincts as well as a prophetic inspiration. The opinions, the 'spiritual judgments,' 'visions of truth,' and the like, are not the more certain because they are accompanied with none of the feelings of effort with which the decisions and view-points, which are consciously worked out, are frequently burdened. Nevertheless, the ease with which they seem to come is apt to lead one to class them with that which is ultimate and incontrovertible.

Although there is no sufficient ground for attributing to the subconscious any peculiar virtue for the discovery of truth, material or spiritual, it *is* probably true that, within the limits of what previous experience has provided, there *may* be a certain amount of elaboration of subconscious elements which, when they finally work their way into consciousness, may seem like inspirations from another world. Such phenomena as post-hypnotic suggestion, so-called unconscious cerebration, and the like, seem to indicate a certain amount of activity in the subliminal region that may at times bud into consciousness. The only way to account for the appearance in consciousness of fully formed ideas with apparently no antecedents is to suppose that in some neural system, determined either by habit or hereditary tendency, there have been a succession of changes which have eventually led to a connection with the processes on the conscious level, or that within consciousness changes have occurred which have brought it into closer connection with some unconscious process, with the result of raising the latter to the conscious level.[1]

[1] Dr. Morton Prince has adduced evidence from the case of Miss Beauchamp that indicates some of the supposed instances of subconscious incubation may really occur on the level of full consciousness. See his *The Dissociation of a Personality.*

The seeming chaos of the subconscious is possibly more apparent than real. We know it only as its processes chance to form connections with the centre of consciousness, or at those times when this centre disintegrates sufficiently to permit of the subliminal elements forming an organization which is conscious. Appearing under such circumstances, they may sometimes seem, by contrast with normal consciousness, to be simply masses of rubbish, disconnected tendencies, irrational, uncontrolled impulses. The centre of consciousness is the adjusting point of the psychophysical organism. Here all the canons of logic have been evolved; the very fact that it is the adjusting centre indicates that reasoning is its special prerogative. The subconscious is thus apparently illogical and without control, except as it is organized with a conscious process. Within limits this is true, but it is equally true that there is another aspect of activity in this region. It *may* represent more adequately the character of its possessor than does the central configuration of elements at some given moment. Hence, under certain circumstances, there may be a certain corrective value for the centre in permitting these marginal processes to have free play. Leuba has given an excellent analysis of some extreme forms of this in his article entitled, 'The state of death.' [1] It appears in less marked degree in the ideals of self-abasement, humility, the cultivation of the spiritual life, as these concepts are held by the average member of the Christian Church. The results aimed at under cover of these terms are real, and have a certain value with reference to the rest of consciousness. James put the matter tersely when he said, "The hubbub of the waking life might close a door which in the dreamy subliminal might remain ajar or open." [2] This may have a meaning

[1] *American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. XIV, pp. 133–145.
[2] *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 241.

without our accepting his suggestion that the door may be ajar to supernatural influences. It may yet be true that within these regions there is a certain healing virtue. Its tensions are, in part, the sublimation of the values that all one's previous experience has brought to consciousness. It possibly acts upon the things uppermost in the mind at a given moment after the analogy of the action of the overtones upon a fundamental in music, giving it richness and color. The centre of consciousness, because it is primarily an adjusting apparatus, is often inadequate as an index to the entirety of life. The view of things from this point must of necessity be partial. Thus, at times, it may be worth while for this central point to distintegrate, or its movement to be held in suspension, that the outlying regions, in so far as they represent one's life in a truer perspective, may assert themselves. The religious notion of dying to one's self and obtaining thereby a fuller or 'divine life' is not at all without meaning, even though we may reject any mystical interpretation of the process. It is certainly a good thing, sometimes, for one to stop striving, and give past values a chance to come in as correctives of the present stress. Life as seen from the point of stress is bound to be distorted, and it therefore needs correction, or at least color, more or less constantly, from the emotional values and intuitions of experience as a whole.

We should not deduce from this that the feelings, or overtones, of the subliminal regions of the mind are intrinsically superior to any other phase of mental process. They have no meaning except in some particular organization of mental activity. It cannot be said that it is either good or bad for religion that it tends to be emotional, should such a characterization prove to be true. It is without doubt good for *every* attitude of mind to be emotional if the emotions are of the appropriate kind. Feeling, appreciation, value, or

whatever we may call it, plays an important part in the development of all our activities. Just how far it may be dissociated from this function and still produce no undesirable results, it is impossible to say. In the complexities of highly developed experiences there are numerous ways in which this matrix of value and emotion may contribute to what one is trying to do at any one moment. As was said in the preceding paragraph, it may even be advantageous for the centre of gravity to shift from the organized to the relatively diffused portions of consciousness. The letting of the centre of emphasis pass from the focus of activity over to the margin, or to what is normally subliminal, is naturally accompanied by a peculiar feeling of ease, the feeling of resignation so well known to certain types of the religious mind. It is a feeling clearly due to cessation of effort in effecting adjustments and to reliance, for the time, upon habit and upon the instinctive forces of the organism.

We may properly say, then, that the action of the subconscious is indispensable to the most adequate functioning of consciousness, and in this we naturally include the religious types of mind. But to say this is not equivalent to setting up the impulses originating in it as intrinsically better than the organized activities developed in the full light of conscious deliberation.

We see, then, in the so-called subconscious, not a region having mysterious and extraordinary powers, sharply divided from the reasoning level of mental life, but an organic and necessary part of that life, a part which ordinarily functions in closest connection with it. We know, also, that the part played by the subconscious is very different in different sorts of reactions. That is to say, at times the activity of the moment is restricted; at other times it is rich with the overtones of past experiences organized in forceful and even surprising ways.

In view of what has preceded, we may properly say that the religious mind *does* have a view of reality that is closed to one whose mental processes are organized from a rigidly rationalistic point of view, not, however, because the former has any influx or inspiration from a supernatural world, but because its point of view is appreciative rather than aggressive and rational. But this advantage of the religious mind over the scientific or rational one is not ultimate — the one must supplement the other, or each will be productive of serious extravagances. That relatively pathological phenomena have appeared so largely in connection with religion in all ages is the best evidence that religion requires the ballast of reason. The religious consciousness, when it is intense, tends, of course, to be quite intolerant to the proposals of reason. Its own valuations appeal to it so directly, so immediately, that it seems impious to question them or even discuss them. This attitude has found symbolic expression in the theory of miraculous illumination by higher powers. The historical setting of this idea we have already outlined at length. The theory of a mystic intercourse between the divine and the human, by which the deliverances of religion attain to a superior validity, is not, of course, the cause of the uncompromising attitude assumed by religion in the presence of science and reason; it is rather a crude and primitive way of expressing it. If the belief in this sort of supernaturalism were abandoned, the religious mind would still tend to feel as it does in the presence of the more rational or deliberative phases of consciousness. The mere fact, however, that, in times of intense religious appreciation, the deliberative processes may be held in relative abeyance, does not indicate that they are thereby bad, psychologically, or that they are uncertain guides to far-reaching, truthful views of life. Unless such processes are more or less constantly at hand to

guide religious aspiration, the latter, in spite of its more inclusive and possibly even truer outlook upon life, will, as repeated observation affirms, evaporate into vagaries, if not into actual pathologies.

One further question[1] should be briefly considered in connection with this discussion of the place of unusual mental experiences in religious development. It is the question of the connection of such phenomena with the development of the modern and relatively individualistic types of religious attitude.

Mental pathology, up to a certain point, is, we believe, especially associated with the development of individuality. The primitive individual, as we have seen, is submerged in his tribe. The deities care for the social group rather than for the separate persons which compose it. This primitive belief regarding the interest of the gods is but the obverse of the practical fact that in early society the desires, thoughts, and feelings of the individual have no independent validity of their own.[2] If they *vary* from those of the group, they are apt to be concealed as bad, and if they are followed up, it is usually in secret, through the medium of magic. However, even among very primitive people, the person who is subject to unusual experiences, or who knows how to induce them, has always enjoyed a certain preëminence. If he could not maintain himself as an individual in a normal frame of mind, he could do so readily, if 'possessed' or insane, simply because he was then no longer a mere individual, but was in the control of higher powers or of *the* 'power.' Thus, among all primitive people we find a superstitious respect paid to everything that savors of the abnormal in the sphere of the psychophysical. It was in seeking some supranormal

[1] *Vide* page 312, *supra*.
[2] *Vide* page 67, *supra*.

experience that the individual first broke loose from the trammels of custom and of tribal religion. In doing so he was simply seeking for a special visitation of the 'power' recognized by his whole group as supremely potent. The extent to which this private approach to superior powers is admissible varies among different peoples. For instance, it was forbidden in ancient Israel, as witness the laws against those having 'familiar spirits.' The condemnation is, however, usually brought against those who are thought to seek *rapport* with powers not recognized as friendly to the tribe, because in this case the individual is supposed to have sinister designs against his fellows. But leaving out of account cases of this kind, there is quite an extended sphere in which it seems to be generally recognized as legitimate for the individual to seek the 'power' which manifests itself through some unusual experience. Many illustrations of this, drawn from various Indian tribes, might be given. Practically all primitive peoples of ancient and modern times have had their diviners, oracles, healers, medicine-men, and others of this ilk, and among many of these peoples it is entirely proper for a youth to go into retirement, seeking for an experience that will bestow upon him a guardian spirit.

It would be too much to say that such unusual experiences have been the *most* important means of enabling the individual to emerge from the group, in possession of a definite and recognizedly valid personality, although they have certainly exerted *some* influence in this direction. The theory of supernatural visitation has served to fix the attention of the individual upon his personal experience, and for the same reason it is granted a sort of unquestioned validity by his fellow-tribesmen. Hence, not merely has the person of great personal powers tended to lead his fellows, but as well the man who dreams, sees visions, hears voices, or is

occasionally 'possessed' in some other way. In fact, the current coin of 'possession' is quite likely to be utilized by the *normally* forceful individual to reënforce his own sense of the worthfulness of his purposes and ideas. Thus, the 'born leader' of men has frequently sought an 'experience' by fasting, prayer, and self-torture. In fact, the very condition of his maintaining his supremacy has often been his ability to show some 'sign' of his power. The shaman, or medicine-man, who cannot, or ceases to be able to offer such proofs of his power, is usually rejected. Prophets in all ages have sought to prove the truth of their messages by supernatural signs. It is from this point of view that Moses and Aaron are reported to have worked certain miracles before Pharaoh on the return of the former from the desert. All the earlier and to some extent the later prophets of Yahweh believed they obtained their messages through such unusual mental experiences, and it was due to these that they attained their influence and general preëminence among their people.

Now, if there is any fundamental difference between modern and primitive types of religion, it is in the different place assigned in each to the individual person. The development of the higher types of modern religions is largely coordinate with the emergence of the person from the primitive, undifferentiated social group. In so far, then, as unusual experiences of any type have tended to emphasize individuality, tended to develop an inner, subjective life with a validity of its own, they have contributed to the development of the modern subjective religious type.

The development of the individual has not, however, necessarily destroyed his sense of, or dependence upon, social relationships. It has rather tended to strengthen and deepen them. The effect of modern subjectivity has, in the main, been the same upon religion. As in the beginning, religion

continues to be essentially a social matter, but it has differentiated as personality has grown in complexity. It has ceased to be an affair of the mass, and has become one in which all the finer shades of personality may find expression, to which each one contributes his own angle of valuation, the peculiar force of his own personality.

Even the most subjective types of religious life are dependent in one way or another upon the background of society, with its various stimuli, and its various forms of approval and disapproval. The respect and awe manifested by one's fellows is an important stimulus to even extreme asceticism. If Simon Stylites had not been visited by thousands of awe-struck pilgrims, it is questionable whether he would have kept up his abode upon the top of the pillar for so lengthy a period. Likewise, when the individual seeks a 'vision,' he cannot entirely abstract himself from the meaning it will have in his social world. And even if earthly social relationships melt away from consciousness, he inevitably builds up in their place a socialized background for his religious values in the spirits or deity of the 'other world,' with whom he holds communion and whose favor and approval he seeks to attain. But even then, he usually comes back eventually to his actual social world with a spirit renewed for its needful activities.[1]

We cannot here take the space to illustrate at length the essential sociality of the higher and more subjective religious experiences.[2] The point we have wished to emphasize is that the unusual experiences associated with religious appreciation have contributed in important ways to the differentiation of religious attitudes, one aspect of which has been an increas-

[1] Cf. Leuba, "Tendances fondamentales des mystiques chrétiens," *Revue Philosophique*, Vol. LIV, pp. 1, 441.

[2] Cf. Rufus M. Jones, *The Social Law in the Spiritual World.*

ing subjectivity, but in the development of this, the primitive element of sociality has not necessarily been lost.

The unusual experience functions in religious development, not only by giving the individual an abnormal prominence in his group, and thus contributing to his sense of personality, but also by actually provoking reflective thought, which, more than anything else, is the sign of growing individuality. It is scarcely possible that the person 'possessed' should always remain in his state of exaltation. When in his normal frame of mind, he will retain some of the preëminence acquired through his unusual states. Even then he will tend to be regarded with a certain respect by his fellows, and they will give to his words more weight than is granted to the sayings of ordinary persons. All this will stimulate his tendency to think, even though he be capable of thinking only upon a very crude level. In times of normal consciousness, also, he will often reflect upon his experiences, and attempt to interpret them in terms of the canons of 'possession' current in his environment. But the thinking, whether crude or refined, is a factor to be reckoned with in religious development.

An interesting illustration of what is referred to in the above paragraph is furnished by the case of William Monod, a self-styled messiah living in France in the last century (b. 1800, d. 1896). When he was a comparatively young man, he was attacked by an acute dementia necessitating his confinement. In this period he at times heard voices which were at first undefined, but which he gradually interpreted as words from God, and which he finally understood to be conveying to him the information that he was Christ, returned to earth. After this early aberration he was apparently sane to the end of a long and active life, unless we are to regard his persistent, though for many years concealed belief in his messiahship as a mild reverberation of his early acute attack. In his long

periods of silence and apparent sanity he elaborated with the utmost care and logical acumen a body of doctrine and a justification for his supposed messiahship. As his biographer says:[1] "Through reflection, through theological elaboration, through contact with men and through the endeavor to adjust his ideas to social conditions, that which was at first mere morbid exaltation and hallucination became, little by little, a defendable religion."

The case of Monod thus illustrates an important aspect of the influence of the pathological in religious development. In the case of some persons having such experiences, doctrines so erratic will be put forth that they can find no permanent place in the existing religious attitudes of the social body. These will either die out or, if forcefully enough presented and if, by chance, expressive of real needs, not sufficiently recognized by existing religions, will result in the development of new sects such as that of Mormonism or of Christian Science, to mention only two among many. On the other hand, the messages of these 'inspired' persons may in a measure effect an actual reconstruction in contemporary religion. The later Hebrew prophets illustrate this alternative. They, without doubt, had unusual experiences, as did the earlier prophets. They seem to have heard 'voices' and to have had their visions. If they had periods of exaltation or rapture, it is psychologically conceivable that they gained in this way peculiar discernments of the moral and religious needs of their times.[2] But, after all, the most important contributions of such experiences must have been a certain sense of assurance that their meditations upon contemporary social condi-

[1] G. Revault D'Allonnes, *Psychologie d'une religion*, Paris, 1908, p. 16. The book is an extremely interesting study of the psychical development of a modern religious innovator. The value of the work is enhanced by a comparative study of other ancient and modern messiahs.

[2] *Vide* pages 278 f., 307, *supra*.

tions were valid and worth promulgating, even at great personal suffering. They believed they spoke the words of Yahweh, but they were, to start with, men of profound insight into life, and it is to this personal character, developed in part by their remarkable experiences, that we must go for the explanation of their lofty messages.

It is this interaction of the unusual experience with periods of reflection (periods induced in part, perhaps, by antecedent experiences) that we may safely look for the greatest positive significance of the relatively pathological in the development of higher religious values. As far as the religious consciousness is bound down by custom, its values are static. It often actually requires one with extraordinary fervor and the momentum acquired from pathological experiences to break with traditional values and blaze new trails for religious progress. It is an actual fact of human history that the prophetic messages which have met with the widest acceptance have come under circumstances such as these.

If the deliverance of the prophet or messiah chances to connect with genuine human needs, and if it is promulgated by disciples who know how to translate it effectively into the varied conditions of social life, it comes to be regarded as true. But the conditions which make for social acceptance are many and subtle, and if the new teaching is lacking in some of these respects, although it may be otherwise quite worthy, it becomes a false doctrine, and its enunciator is finally classed with the spurious prophets, of whom there have been many. The biographer of W. Monod says, truly, that the only reason for classing this man with the 'false christs' was his inability to gain wide social acceptance. His life was pure, dignified, and yet humble. There can be no fault found with his ethical teaching, which, in fact, did not differ materially from accepted Christian doctrine, and his theological justification of his

mission was as adequate as anything that the New Testament can put forth in maintenance of Jesus as the Messiah.

We have come at length to the end of a long and difficult inquiry, and yet we do not imagine we have solved or even stated all the problems involved. Perhaps we have indicated at least a legitimate way in which such things are to be approached. The pathological phenomena which have always been more or less associated with religion are seen to be, in part, an outcome of the very fervor of religious valuation itself and, in part, of the primitive belief in supernaturalism which has tended to induce in the individual unusual states of mind and unusual modes of behavior. It has been further pointed out that, while subconscious processes do not furnish any basis for a continuance of the primitive belief in the possibility of the interaction of superior powers with the human mind, these same processes may actually contribute in positive ways to religious appreciations, and finally, that the unusual experience has been one of the phases of the differentiation of the individual from the social group, and consequently that it has contributed something to the highly differentiated consciousness of some of the modern culture races. As was seen, however, the ultimate validity of any such experience, historically, at least, has been determined by the degree in which it weaves itself into some social organism or, failing in that, constructs a social matrix of its own.

CHAPTER XIII

RELIGIOUS VALUATION AND SUPERNATURALISM [1]

In the preceding chapter [2] the question was raised as to whether the valuations of religion can actually be considered valid except upon the basis of some sort of supernatural world of spirits or deities with whom communion is possible and from whom various inspirations or influxes of energy may be expected, if not for the purpose of changing the order of nature, as the primitive man imagines, at least for the purpose of bestowing upon the suppliant strength of will or fresh courage in the midst of sorrow or bitter calamity. This question is an altogether legitimate one, even though psychology should seem to be able to account entirely for all the phases of religious experience without recourse to spirit agencies of any sort. We say it is legitimate, because one sort of experience cannot be said, offhand, to be more reliable than another kind. If the religious mind contends that it actually receives its values from a supernatural world, and that it continually recuperates itself through intercourse with such a higher order of existence, its various experiences and concepts should be examined, not merely to determine whether they *can* be explained by the canons of psychology, but as well to determine whether their real significance and value for human life would disappear if a supernatural world capable of interacting with the natural should be rejected.

[1] Portions of this chapter were published in the *Monist*, Vol. XV, p. 248, under the title "The pragmatic interpretation of Christian dogmas."

[2] *Vide supra*, page 320.

Our point of view in these studies has continually been that the religious attitude is a fairly determinable psychological complex which has been built up in the course of the life-process and which, therefore, bears a definite relation to the physical and social environment within which it has taken shape. Since it is thus a psychical complex rather than an elementary instinct, it is not necessarily always present as a definite attitude in a given individual, and it is further quite conceivable that in some persons it may never be clearly organized at all. But, notwithstanding this, we may assume the attitude *does* have a determinable place within the life-process. It will help in the solution of the problem of the chapter to try to state as well as we can what that place is.

What the final meaning, or reality, of the universe may be, we scarcely need say, is practically beyond all possible advances in our knowledge. The *best* statement we can give of the world we must always feel falls far short, if not of what present experience has given us, at least of what further experience will hold to be valid. And, not merely do we feel the universe affords unlimited opportunities for the development of experience, but also we just as truly feel that what we actually are or have attained has an element of subtlety about it that defies statement. Every formula we can possibly construct regarding our experience is *inevitably* abstract, and we know when we have spoken that life is richer in meanings than our best phrases have or can give it credit for being. Our statements are usually confined to what is accomplished, to the static aspects of experience, whereas life is essentially projective, striving, reaching out. Thus, any statement which takes account only of what we have actually done thus far, or does not take into account the direction of our movement, must be either untrue or inadequate. Aspiration is *real*, even though the specific way in which we may be able to symbolize

our aspirations may not be descriptive of something in the world in quite the same way as are such concepts as stone or tree.

Now, the religious consciousness is, as we conceive it, an attitude built up about this larger meaning of experience which we *feel* but cannot *state* except in relatively vague symbolic forms. There is nothing especially metaphysical about this point of view. On the one hand, there *is* such a thing as the religious attitude of mind, and, on the other, experience *does* appeal to us as more worthful than we shall ever be able to state in exact terms. The religious attitude represents the attempt of some, if not most, minds to grapple with this larger reality or meaning of life, to give it a symbolism that may render it more definitely available, or capable of playing some explicit part in our social interactions. But, inasmuch as the universe, as we have already said, will probably always offer possibilities of experience beyond any actual attainment, it will usually be found to be true, in the light of more extended dealings with things, that our formulas and symbols err, not in overstating the possibilities of experience, but rather in narrowing down these possibilities and tending to limit them for all time.

What we have just said applies preëminently to the account of reality offered by religion. Religious concepts and valuations are symbols of relationships and meanings which must expand as experience expands. Thus, its hypothesis of a supernatural world is purely symbolic of a preëxisting valuating attitude, and the question as to whether this supernatural world *exists* as it is postulated does not add to nor detract from the validity of the valuating consciousness. If the question of the reality of the order of existence postulated by religion is raised, we should have to say that probably all the concepts of religion fall *short* of an adequate account of ex-

perience rather than that they attribute too *much* to it. The religious mind may suppose, for instance, the existence of a universal moral order and a supernatural being or beings who have some connection with this order and with whom it may have communion. Particular efforts may be made, upon the strength of such a moral order, with its supernatural beings, or a crisis or problem may appear which seems inexplicable except upon the supposition of a God who is just, or jealous, or loving. Or, to put it another way, the elements of the crisis which we face may be *so* conflicting that all experience will seem to resolve itself into a chaos unless there is in the universe an all-wise God through whom the present conflict may be given a meaning or through whom order will in some way be wrought out. All persons may not agree that the particular hypothesis offered is satisfactory, but that is immaterial here. Manifestly, the important point is that the supposition *does* render some experience intelligible to its possessor, and for the time being such a one is not concerned as to whether his hypothesis is a final and adequate description of reality or not.

Briefly restated, the idea is this: Thought and the products of thought are to be interpreted, and hence are valid only with reference to certain crises or tensions that arise in action. It is not permissible to take the conceptual machinery thus evolved and hold that it gives us a cue to the construction of a reality beyond experience. The concepts of the chemist are true because they enable him to control his reactions, but he has not the least right to assume that he has therefore in them an account of the ultimate nature of matter. They give an account of it only as it is concerned in practical experiences of the sort with which the chemist deals. It is an almost universal tendency, however, to take these statements that seem to give us definite control under specific conditions and to

generalize them into dicta about absolute existence. As opposed to this tendency, it is here maintained that our concepts are only functionally valid, and do not refer to ontological realities. All our realities are of the functional variety. They *are* realities *because* they serve these definite functions, and for no other reason. Some of them have a wider variety of uses than others, and hence appear in a greater number of our practical experiences. As such they seem to have a high degree of objectivity. 'Objective reality' is, in fact, our name for those elements which appear in the greatest variety of situations and interpret the most varied experiences. Such a statement does not dispute the reality of the world, but simply tells in what it consists. It amounts to this, that whatever else reality may be, as far as we are concerned, it is something involved in the onward movement of our experience, and all our descriptions of it are with reference to its function in this onward movement.

But we are not here interested in the general application of this principle. We wish rather to work it out with reference to the meaning of religious concepts. It should throw light upon the vexed question as to the place and authority of the dogmas of past ages in the modern religious consciousness. It is worth while to inquire whether they should be rejected *in toto* as false, or whether they have a certain validity, and if so, in what that validity may consist. Does the dogma of the Trinity, for instance, have any claim from this point of view to being a valid statement of the being of God? We should note first the context in which some of these dogmas originated.

It is well known that New Testament Christianity was not dogmatic but practical. That is, it did not promulgate the dogmas of a system of religion, but was the exponent of a certain manner of life. "The teachings of Jesus do not

appear in a systematic form, but in terms of life and social relations. It requires laborious research and reconstruction to formulate them into scientific statements. Neither do the apostles present the Gospel in a theology, although doubtless they come nearer to it than Jesus does, and that is why theology took its point of departure from them rather than from Jesus. But still, even with them, while the theological material is more accessible, there is no systematic arrangement nor attempt at true philosophical explanation. They wrote for specific practical purposes, and always massed their teachings so as to bear upon the end in view. . . . The New Testament is a book of religious truth, not of theological science; and it is content to state this truth in its practical aspects, upon the sole authority of Jesus, and not because its philosophical foundations have been worked out and approved."[1]

"The distinctively theological interest which first began to make itself strongly felt in the Church during the second century centred immediately in Christology and the doctrine of the Trinity."[2] As we have seen, this doctrine does not appear as a dogma in the New Testament, for primitive Christianity was concerned with the concrete problems of life. Thus the concepts on which the dogma was later founded and which are to-day interpreted in the light of the dogma, were essentially the expression of definite practical situations and problems. It is true the idea of the Trinity was present in the early Church, but purely as a practical concept. It had developed in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era under the influence of Greek thought. It grew out of the notion that God could not act directly upon the world, but only through certain intermediaries, as angels, his word, or his spirit. Hence, when anything occurred which seemed to

[1] Osborn, *The Recovery and Restatement of the Gospel*, pp. 171, 172.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

demand the explanation of supernatural influence, it was natural to attribute it to the spirit of God or to his angels. In this form it was not a dogma, but simply a working concept that was in harmony with the then current notion of God.

This is certainly the context of its appearance in the New Testament. Wherever the Spirit is mentioned, it is with reference to just such practical problems or crises within experience, problems that demanded some sort of explanation. For example, the mysterious conception of Mary is explained thus. The baptism of Jesus differs from that of John by the presence in it of this divine element. Certain peculiar states of mind, or changes of mental attitude, that seem to transcend experience come to attention, and these are interpreted as caused by the Holy Spirit.[1]

That it is essentially a practical concept comes out most clearly when Jesus seeks to allay the sorrow of the disciples over his departure by promising the Holy Spirit as a comforter in his place. In no case do we find reference to the Spirit except when some real or conceived situation of life is in the foreground. If, with their peculiar heritage of thought, these practical situations were met in the light of such a concept of the relation of God to man, we shall certainly not wish to deny its validity, but maintain rather that it was essentially illogical to turn this doctrine into a dogma and postulate as

[1] As examples note the case of Zacharias cited in Luke i. 15; that of Elizabeth in the same chapter, 41; that of Simeon, Luke ii. 25. So also through the concept of the Holy Spirit is explained the state of mind that lay back of otherwise unaccountable actions. Thus in Acts iv. 31, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." It is a means by which one may be endowed with wisdom, Luke xii. 12. It is the agency by which one's entire mental attitude may be changed, as in Acts viii. 15, 17, 18, 19; x. 44, 45, 46; xi. 15–16; xv. 8; xix. 2–6; Titus iii. 5. Prophetic power is to be explained by its presence, Luke ii. 26; iii. 22. Our own attitude of life is modified by it, Romans xiv. 17; xv. 13; 1 Thes. i. 6.

ontologically real what had reality only as it served certain functions in concrete life. How could its practical significance be enhanced by its being generalized into an ultimate view as to the nature of the person of God? Every thinker must feel that the reality of God is far greater than can be crystallized in any such relation as that of son, spirit, and father. Such concepts are simply ways of making his infinitude come into working contact with our life.

As with the question of the spirit of God, so with that of the Son. His significance was certainly a functional one. Whether we take the standpoint of those of his time who expected a Messiah or that of the Christian world of to-day, we must admit that he was significant to them, and is significant to us, primarily because he is conceived as the mediator of certain definite experiences. With the modern Christian the significance of Jesus is certainly as an interpreter of God. The phrase, "What would Jesus do," however objectionable it may be, is at least evidence of this attitude. The dogma as to his metaphysical relation to God is meaningless except in so far as he is also functionally real.

In the New Testament times it is, of course, true, as every one knows, that the followers of Christ conceived him rather in terms of a definite earthly mission, more or less, in the light of the earlier Jewish notions, and by no means as bearing a certain metaphysical relation to God. He bore a definite relation to the glory of Israel, if not temporally, at least in a spiritual sense. The conclusion is, then, that both the Son and the Spirit were originally the embodiments of certain practical attitudes related in a definite way to the tendency that became prominent among the Alexandrian Jews to exalt God infinitely above all that is earthly, human, and imperfect, even above all human conception. "From the idea that God is absolutely incomprehensible and infinitely

exalted flows the other that man cannot enter into direct relations with him, that he can neither know nor tell what he is." [1]

"This idea that God is infinitely exalted above the world and without direct relations with it, necessarily led to the recognition of intermediate beings, through whom relations might be made possible." [2]

The point of the whole discussion is this: that there existed at that time a certain attitude of mind that could best view its onward movement in terms of son and spirit, and God himself could likewise be best conceived, and no doubt always can be for that matter, as a father. It is further held that these concepts interpreted to the believer certain practical situations, gave him their value, so to speak, and hence freed him for further action in similar directions. We do not question but that such an attitude may still exist, and hence demand such concepts for its expression. But the point of emphasis, in any case, is upon the tension within a certain type of experience rather than upon any reality outside this tension. It is only when the specific need has passed, or at least is no longer realized acutely, that the conceptual tools are brought into clear consciousness and come to be regarded as having a reality of their own. It is then that the functional reality ceases and the dogma takes its place. If a certain type of mind finds the concept of the Trinity significant, it is certainly a fact to be taken into account, but it does not follow, as has already been said, that because it is true as an interpretative principle it is also true without reference to *any* experience that is true ontologically.

This point of view may be applied with profit to a number of other Christian doctrines. We may quote in this connec-

[1] Piepenbring, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 249.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 250.

tion from an article by H. Barker.[1] Traditional religion embodied "a great religious or ethical conception, that of a suffering saviour-God. Such a conception appealed directly to faith; it was a gospel of salvation that told of a divine love and pity greater than it was possible to hope for, and summoned men to strive with all their energies to be worthy of their God. Such a gospel was *worth* believing. It was a true object of faith; and its moral grandeur was a legitimate motive for faith. On the other hand, the traditional creed set forth certain miraculous or supernatural facts which guaranteed the reality of its ethical conception." Barker illustrates the above point as follows: "The essence of the belief in the resurrection of Christ on the religious side is the conviction that the personality of Christ has a spiritual value which constrains us to think of it as eternal. A universe in which it passed away and lesser things remained, would, for the Christian, be irrational. Now this conviction can as little be proved by any ghost-like appearances of Christ after his death as it can be refuted by their absence. If such appearances counted for anything, they would be as important in the case of any other man of whom they have been asserted. . . . The truth is that the Christian's religious conviction about Christ craves for some visible sign and confirmation of its truth, and the resurrection seems to faith to be such a sign. The error lies in turning a symbol which only faith can apprehend into the very premise by which the faith itself is proved. . . . Thus, when the symbol begins to be used as a logical premise, we may be sure that the faith has lost its intrinsic certainty, and is seeking to quiet itself in some outward and inferior guarantee." Putting this point in the terms that we have been using, we should say that when the practical situations cease

[1] "Factors in the efficiency of religious belief," *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. XI, p. 329.

to be acutely felt, the conceptual machinery that belonged with them in a manner holds over and finds its guarantee, no longer in its practical efficacy in a certain type of experience, but in the unconditioned reality of that which before had been real only because it had proved itself practically valuable. The intrinsic certainty, referred to in this statement from Barker, is the same point we have made regarding all practical attitudes. Intrinsic certainty is a characteristic attributed to all successful experience. Abstract the concepts from the situation that caused them to differentiate, and these specialized elements are left, as it were, in the air. Hence attention is fixed upon them, and they are held to be valid in themselves. This attitude is represented in many types of emotional experience. The virtuoso in the sphere of emotion has abstracted his feelings from the situations in which they belong, in which they have been in consciousness only as contributing to an end toward which the whole experience is moving. He has abstracted them, we repeat, and brought them to the focus of attention; in other words, given them a validity of their own. It seems to us that this procedure is parallel to the one we have been discussing in the religious sphere.

Barker continues: "Consider the belief in the miraculous birth of Christ. The absence of any strictly logical relation between the supernatural event and the religious doctrine which is connected with it is here more patent than ever. That Christ was born into the world in a preternatural way is in itself no proof at all that he was an incarnation of the deity, although, of course, to one already convinced of his divinity the miraculous birth has a certain fitness as a symbol." As Barker further points out, the symbol has, however, a certain function, for faith comes in pulsations, that is, the practical situations in which the symbol is significant are not always at hand, but the attitude of readiness to meet them must be

preserved intact, and this is the more possible, if the tools of the attitude can continue to be held in the foreground of consciousness. The mind is thus kept accessible to the influences by which faith can be revived. "The Christian whose faith had grown weak attributed the lack of faith to himself as a fault, because he did not doubt that the objects of faith were there to be apprehended, although he could no longer feel their reality and truth for himself."[1] In other words, we represent the values of our past experiences by means of the conceptual machinery they involve, apparently because it can be most easily isolated. But the mental concomitants of a practical attitude can never be isolated and still be expected to retain their *original* nature. It may be the only way we can represent to ourselves that we have had the experience, but we must nevertheless not forget that this conceptual framework is not the original experience. The only reality the conceptual structure or system of dogmas has, its only validity, is in pointing to a time when practical situations *were* very acutely felt.

The significant characteristic of the practical situation is that it is immediate, and its reality needs no logical proof. No theory of the universe, no philosophy, can disprove the immediate appeal of the practical crisis, or rob it of its total independence of the necessity of logical support. But as soon as there is felt to be a necessity for proving the attitudes involved, the situation itself has passed away. The whole force and significance of the concepts and attitudes depends upon the undisputed presence of the practical situation. Thus "the supernatural facts embodied in the creed do not need to be *disproved* to lose their peculiar value. This value is already lost when they can be reasonably *doubted*.

[1] "Factors in the efficiency of religious belief," *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. XI, p. 333.

Their peculiar function is gone from the moment they appear to be doubtful." [1] That they are doubted means that they have lost their dynamic relations to experience, that practical needs have changed, and hence that different systems of concepts are now needed. The only way to prove any claim of theology is to show its vital relation to the crises of life. No one was ever convinced of the truths of religion in any other way, nor has any one who has believed them from this side lost his faith by mere ratiocination. If such a one has lost his faith, it has been because its vital contact with his life has ceased, and the work of reason is, then, simply to show that what is left is dead. Our point, in a word, is this, that the reality of a practical situation is recognized immediately, and its tools are in the same immediate manner regarded as valid solely because of their dynamic connection with the situation. There is no other way to prove their truth, and to attempt to do it otherwise is to admit that they have lost their value, and hence are false.

It is suggestive to apply this point of view to the doctrine of the second coming of Christ. There is no question but that the expectation of this event had a very important place in the thought of New Testament times. It is an excellent illustration of the evolution of a belief according to the theory here presented. The Church of to-day, obliged to admit that the early Church was mistaken in the particular form in which it held to this belief, holds it now in a modified form. But in a sense the early Church was *not* in error. This belief in the second coming of Christ was a part of a more general attitude toward the world and human conduct, and as such it served to mediate a definite practical attitude which was then significant. When this appropriate context disappeared,

[1] " Factors in the efficiency of religious belief," *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. XI, p. 333.

the belief was left stranded and, in the eyes of later ages, it was manifestly a mistaken one, as far as ontological fulfilment went. But the conviction that it stood for an ontological reality has led each generation to reconstruct the belief on a basis that at least offered a possibility of fulfilment. What is true of this particular belief is true of all others referred to above, except that in this one its falsity when taken out of its context, was so self-evident that it had to be reconstructed if it were to continue to be believed. Of the other dogmas it was not so evident that they were meaningless when thus isolated, and hence they were more easily adhered to in unreconstructed form.

It is likewise as regards the doctrine of inspiration. The individual who finds in the Scriptures a key that interprets his ethical life asks for no other proof that they are inspired. But the so-called logical proofs of inspiration never convince any one, because when such proofs are offered it is evidence that inspiration is now taken as a fact out of connection with the actual unfolding of experience. It is well known that no argument for the inspiration of the Scriptures, for immortality, or for the divinity of Christ is convincing to any one who does not believe in them already as facts of immediate experience.

The various phases of supernaturalism that appear in religion thus seem to be but symbols of valuation, and cannot be taken as means of establishing its truth or its falsity. Suppose religious values are, in part at least, communicated by revelation. That fact would not in any way add to their certainty or worthfulness. He who believes in spiritual beings who can impart higher truth to man, usually believes also in bad as well as in good spirits, and how is he to know but that the revelation is from evil spirits, except as it is compared with other things which are regarded as good and, further, as he utilizes that revelation in the interpretation of human life and

human relations? On the one hand, then, it is in the intrinsic character of the whole that its validity is to be sought, and on the other, in its adaptability to social need rather than in any supposedly miraculous events attending its first expression. "A religion which has endured every possible trial, which has outlived every vicissitude of human fortunes, and which has never failed to reassert its power unbroken in the collapse of old environments, . . . declares itself by irresistible evidence to be a thing of reality and power. If the religion of Israel and of Christ answers these tests, the miraculous circumstances of its promulgation need not be used as the first proof of its truth, but must rather be regarded as the inseparable accompaniments of a revelation which has the historical stamp of reality." [1] Although this author holds to the idea of miraculous revelation, it is evident from these words that he believes also that the character of the values, especially as they stand the test of social approval, is the really vital point. Let it alone and see if it will come to anything was the intent of wise words addressed to the Jewish Sanhedrin when that body was considering the advisability of adopting severe measures against the new Christian sect, and, as far as psychology is concerned, there is no reason for demanding another test. As long, however, as the hypothesis of supernaturalism persists in human thought, so long will it be associated with religious values and so long will the cultivation of the religious attitude always afford more or less stimulus to some types of minds to seek unusual varieties of experiences and to find in such experiences objective, tangible evidence of the verity of their faith.

While the concept of supernaturalism is mere symbolism, it is probably, then, one that is necessary for the expression of higher valuations. It is an evidence of our social nature and

[1] W. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 16.

of the social form in which we must almost of necessity do our thinking. Inasmuch as religious values are of social origin, and have been elaborated in the various processes of social intercourse, it is almost inevitable that they should always be most clearly and most forcefully expressed in terms of social relationships. If we express the reality of our faith in life and human striving in some sort of terminology of spirits, deities, or of a single supreme God, with whom social intercourse is possible, and from whom help may come to us, as help may come from a father or friend, we are not going beyond the possibilities that the universe affords, even though our particular symbolism may be quite inadequate as an *ultimate* statement of reality.

Religion is essentially a faith that the universe, in which we have our being, contains the elements that can satisfy in some way our deepest aspirations. The concept of God as a father and a friend, with whom communion is possible, is a legitimate way for the religious mind to symbolize its faith in the reality of life. In so far as such symbolism satisfies and helps, it represents a genuine aspect of reality. It is also quite possible for the religious mind to develop under the stimulus of this method of expression. But, as we have said, the mode of expression can never be taken as a means of proving the validity of the attitude of mind behind it.[1]

[1] For an admirable presentation of the theme of this chapter from a theological view-point, see G. B. Foster, *The Finality of the Christian Religion*, pp. 270–275, *et. al.* *E.g.* "We can have eternal values without supernaturalism, and development without naturalism," p. 275.

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INDEX

Activity, relation of, to consciousness, 37; primacy of, 40, 45, 65; differentiation of, various causes, 48 ff.; due to emotional overflow, 54; or to mere playfulness, 58; associated with the development of the value-consciousness, 60, 62, 88, 132; accessory forms of, 101; relation of, to periods of suspense and relaxation, 103; *see also* Practical.

Adonis, 238.

Africa, East, rudimentary social organization of the Masai, 98; Wakamba, social organization defective, 108; Bantu, 146; South, native races of, 58; Bushmen, 109 ff.; Kafirs, 82, 97, 116, 233, 255; West, fishing ceremony, 56; objects of attention among natives, 60; unstable social organization, 71, 95, 213, 259; character of religion, 91, 213; no creation myths, apparently, 79.

Algonkin *manitou*, 134 f., 145.

"All-father" concept of Australians, 211; a quasi-deity, 250; a monotheistic concept, 269.

Ancestor worship, 215; Hearn, L., on, 70; doubtful in West Africa, 70; Leonard's theory of, 232, 254; among the Kafirs, 233–235.

Anderson, J. C., 145.

Angas, G. F., 294, 298.

Angekok, 90.

Animals, significance of primitive man's interest in, 158 ff., 231 f., 234.

Animism, not primitive, 177; a supposed stage in the evolution of religion, 205, 213; compared with the 'concept' of mystic power, 234; only one factor in the evolution of the god, 229.

Aston, 112, 114 f., 135, 240.

Attention and valuation, 46; objects of, in primitive life, 158 f., 230 f.

Attitude, definition of, 30; relation of, to overt action, 37, 39, 40, 225; dependence of, upon social heredity, 41; not permanently existing, 216; *see* Religion.

Attitude, æsthetic, dependent upon active impulses, 41; social origin of, 65, 100; distinguished from religious, 84 f.; place of, in ceremonies, 85; association of, with religious valuation, 313.

Australians, 60, 113; secret names of, 32; sacred objects of, 61; relatively high degree of social organization, 75, 210, 213; *Intichiuma* ceremonies, 149; theory of reincarnation, 76; creation myths, 79, 251 f.; æsthetic significance of ceremonies, 85; possible belief in mystic power, 147 f.; *churinga* associated with mystic power, 153 f.; attitude toward sorcerer, 197; initiation ceremonies, 209; "all-father" concept of, 250 f.; moral status, early ideas of, 288 ff.; causes of this opinion, 289; personal virtues, 290 ff.; food restrictions of, 291; chastity, ideas of, regarding, 293; marriage regulations of, 293; treatment of wives, 293; of children, 296; infanticide, 296; treatment of old and infirm, 297; cannibalism, 298 f.; morality that of custom, 299 f.; rules strictly enforced, 300; theft, low regard for human life, fights, 302 f.; fear of strangers, 302; life marked by kindness, 303.

Bandelier, A. F., 93.

Bantu, belief of, in mystic power, 146.

Baptism, Christian, an imitative and reduced mediating act, 55.

Barton, G. A., 47, 81, 88, 124 f., 215, 224, 231, 256, 258, 271, 284.

Bicknell, A. C., 298.

Biological method in social interpretations, 207.
Birth rites of the Zuñi, 105.
Blood-bond in the development of religion, 69.
Boas, F., 34, 67, 79, 92, 98, 159, 182 f., 193, 253, 282.
Bonney, F., 295, 297.
Bourke, Captain, 129.
Brinton, D., 25, 134.
Budde, K., 271 ff., 275, 277, 285.
"Bull-roarers," 82.
Bushmen, playful and religious dances of, 109; the practical and accessory in religion of, 110.

Cameron, 293.
Ceremonies, pigeon snaring, 51 f.; deer catching, 57; fishing, 56; of circumcision and knocking out of teeth, 76; imitative of animals, 75; æsthetic values of, 85; origin of, in social and economic activities, 99 f., 104; natal, of the Zuñi, 104; primitive type of, among Wakamba, Matabele, Korenas, 108; practical and sportive character of, with the Bushmen, 110 f.; ordination, of Toda dairyman, 122; rice and honey, of Todas, 118; Toda, connected with the buffaloes, 122; *ibid.*, with salt, 122; sacrificial, of the Todas, 123; social origin of Semitic, 125; 'form' and 'content' of, 126; social character of, among the Indians, 127; rain-making, 129; fishing, of Thompson Indians, 129; Roman religious, an extension of practical activities, 129 f.; Australian *Intichiuma*, not necessarily magical, 149; magical, reflex origin of, 179; pre-magical, 181 ff.; initiation, 209; new moon, significance of, 241.
Chance associations, rôle of, in the development of customs, 48.
Charms, Malay hunting, 51 f.
Christ, birth of, 348; second coming of, 350.
Christianity, primitive, not dogmatic, 342.
Codrington, 94, 143 f., 184, 259.
Coe, G. A., 3, 320.
Common element in diverse religions, 32.
Comparative religion, basis of, 213.
Conscience in primitive and modern man, 281.
Consciousness, relation of, to instinct, 26; and movement, 28, 37; religious, *see* Attitude, Religion.
Consciousness of value, 44 f.; dependent upon mediating activities, 59 f.
Content of religious consciousness, 4, 5; not unique, 5, 6; interrelation of function and, 17.
Creation myths, social significance of, 78 f.
Creed, J. M., 292, 297.
Crooke, W., 197.
Crucifixion sects, 310.
Culture-hero, 235, 249 ff., 254; of Australians, 250; of Todas, 252; of N. A. Indians, 252 f.; beginnings of, among the Melanesians, 253; not convertible with ancestor, 254; relation of, to social background, 254.
Curtiss, S. I. 283.
Customs, origin of, 46 ff.; rôle of chance association in, 48; adaptation of means to end, 53; sometimes originate in emotional overflow, 54, 101; relation of, to playfulness, 58 f.; transmission of, 48.
Cutten, G. B., 2, 309, 310.

Dairy religion of Todas, 118; origin of ritual, 121.
D'Allonnes, R., 335.
Dances, moonlight, of Bushmen, 58; sportive and ceremonial, 108.
Date palm, importance of, to Semites, 126 *et al.*
Davenport, F., 2, 310, 312, 316.
Dawson, J., 295, 297.
Declé, L., 108.
Deer-catching ceremonies of the Malays, 57.
Deity, deities, nature of concept of, 12; relation of, to phenomena, 12; idea of, not universal, 32; general and local, in W. Africa, 74, 95; Kafir ideas of, 97; stranded, of Todas, 120, 225; primitive, of Romans doubtful and subordinate to the cult, 129; mystic potency of the Indians at first regarded as a deity, 134; not abstract power personified, 163; supernatural beings not of necessity

deities, 201; "all-father" concept of the Australians, 211; problem of origin, nature of, 223; intimate relation of, to social and economic interests, 224; a natural development of social bodies, 225 f.; lack of relation between various ideas of, 226; attitude of magic toward, 226 f.; one, only, of the symbols of religious valuation, 227; Frazer's theory of the origin of, 227 f.; diverse conditions contribute to the genesis of, 229, 238; not developed from the animistic view of the world, 230; psychological problem of the origin of, 230; question of ancestor worship in development of, 252; remote, significance of, 235 f.; definiteness of, dependent upon relation of, to present social interest, 237; the 'mangod,' 239; primitive Shinto, 240 f.; real gods of Tana, 244; of fertility possibly actual persons, 245; relation of regard for, to the supposition of their possession of mystic potency, 248; Lyall's theory of origin of, 248; culture-heroes as embryonic deities, 250 f.; social 'construct,' 254, 256 f., 265; symbol of valuation, 261, 275; not a descriptive concept, 262 f.; ideas of, lacking among tbe Central Australians, 269; psychological statement of the theological problem of the gradual revelation of the deity, 276; not a *mere* reflection of the character of the worshippers, 276; higher types of, not qualitatively distinct from the lower, 279, 281; heathen, not non-ethical, 281; relation of, to conduct, 281; *see* Monotheism, Yahweh.
Delacroix, H., 2, 310.
Development of types, 218.
Dewey, J., 37, 41, 46, 55, 279.
Dickinson, G. L., 287.
Disease, treatment of, by magic, 194.
Dixon, R., on the Northern Maidu, 141.
Dorsey, G. A., 105, 141.
Duty, origin of sense of, 42.
Dyaks, 83, 215.

Earp, G. B., 294.
Economic interests, 82 f., 118, 124 f.
Ellis, A. B., 60, 70, 73, 77, 91, 95, 97, 215, 235.
Emotion and the interruption of activity, 59; sometimes enhanced by overt acts, 62.
End, the religious, preliminary statement of, 7.
Eskimo, customs of, 61, 247, 282; private property limited, 67; values of, 72; rudimentary religion of, 73; no creation myths, 79; social and judicial assemblies of, 90, 100; possible belief in a mystic power, 159; pre-magical and pre-religious rites of, 182 f.; magic of, 193; monsters of their mythology, origin of, 242.
Ethnology and psychology of religion, 38.
Evolution of religion, 24, 32, 204 ff.; preliminary questions regarding, 25, 30; not from a primal instinct, or perception, 25; relation of, to matrix of activities, 28; of attitudes rather than of absolute mentality, 33; dependent upon social heredity, 33, 86; erroneous conception of the problem of, 204 f.; complexity of, 206; spurious evolutionary series, 206 f.; unequal development of different aspects of the social body, 208 f.; problem of, 214; acquisition of momentum and individuality by various religious types, 218; two points to be taken into account, 220; relation of to development of individuality, 221 f.; problem of, in respect to deities, 226.
Ewe-speaking negroes, 70, 91, 97.
Exogamy, 209.
Experience as projective, 276.

Fancy, idle, in myth-making, 102.
Farnell, 92, 155 f., 255.
Fetichism, 205, 213.
Finite *vs.* infinite values, a psychological rather than an ontological distinction, 279.
Fletcher, A. C., on the concept of *wakonda*, 139.
Food problem, import of, in primitive life and religion, 60, 74, 80; *see* Todas, Semites, Australians, Indians, etc.

Food rules, primitive, 209, 291.
Fowler, W., 129 ff., 155.
Fraser, J., 291, 293, 297 f.
Frazer, G. F., 147, 149, 151, 179, 189, 227, 239, 241, 243 ff.; theory of magic and religion, 165 ff.; criticism of, 169 f.
Frey, Scandinavian god of fertility, 244.
Function the ground of differentiation of religious type of consciousness, 6; value of such a statement, 8; relation of, to valuation, 15; two aspects of the problem of, 15; illustration from æsthetics, 15 f.; interrelation of, and content, 17.
Furness, 177.

Galton, F., 206.
Giddings, F., 46.
God, nature of relation to world, 12 f.; development of idea of, 276; psychological problem of, 263, 267; single, *see* Monotheism; absolute goodness of, 279; concept of, as infinitely exalted, 343 f., 345 f.; supernaturalism and idea of, 352; *see also* Deity.
Granger, F., 2, 308.
Griffis, 241.
Guardian spirits, suggestion of, among the Kwakiutl, 92; among the Maidu, 141; among the Algonkin, 137.

Habit, significance of, for the valuating consciousness, 62; social, in religious ceremonial, 113; *see* Todas and Bushmen.
Haigh, E. A. R., 155.
Hase and McDougall, 211, 231, 233, 269.
Head-hunters, main interest of, 83, 215, 238; naming of chief's son, 117.
Hearn, L., on ancestor worship, 70.
Henderson, J., 290, 297.
Henotheism, 205.
Hetherwick, A., 146.
History of religion, 38.
Hobhouse, L. T., 240, 249, 312.
Höffding, H., 30, 46, 216, 261 f., 277.
Hollis, A. C., 98, 146.
Hottentots, social element in ceremonials of, 109.
Howison, 13.
Howitt, A., 209, 213, 250 f., 269, 291, 296 ff.
Howitt, J. N. B., 140, 159.
Huron, festivals of, 82.

Ideational constructions based upon active attitudes, 225.
Indians, North American, creation myths of, 79; Huron festivals, 82; Kwakiutl social organization, 92; Pueblo, 93, 104; Navaho, 62, 85; Moqui, 102, 127; Wichita, 105; Iroquois, festivals, 106; *orenda* of, 140; among various other tribes, 141; Thompson, 107; Algonkin *manitou*, 134; Siouan *wakonda*, 138 f.; Pawnee, 141 f.; Lillooet, hunting ceremonies of, 247; burial ceremonies, 219.
Individual not at first differentiated from the group, 221; development of, as dependent upon unusual experiences, 330 f.
Individuality of social groups and strains, 218.
Initiation ceremonies, 209; social significance of, 75.
Inspiration, dogma of, 351.
Instinct as basis of religion criticised, 25; referred to, 205; nature of, 25 f.; relation to consciousness, 26; real intent of instinct theories of religion, 26; Marshall's theory, 27; possible truth in instinct theories, 31; possibly refers to the primitive concept of a mystic potence, 136.
Interest in animals and vegetation, significance of, 158 ff., 230 ff.; relation of, to concept of mystic potency, 234; in spirits, 234.
Intichiuma ceremonies of Australians, nature of, 149 f.
Iroquois, 82, 106, 140.
Ishtar, 126, 138.
Isis, 258.

James, W., 13, 37, 306, 310, 319, 322, 326.
Janus, origin of cult, 130.
Japanese religion, social character of, 91; attitude on cleanliness, 112; social character of ceremonies, 114 f.; feeble concept of personality, 241.

Jastrow, M., 25, 28 f., 31, 155, 205.
Jevons, F., 129, 173 f., 191; on pre-magical rites, 184.
Jones, R. M., 308, 310, 333.
Jones, W., 134 f., 142.
Judd, C. H., 37.
Judicial-social gatherings of the Eskimo, 90, 100.

Kaempfer, 114.
Kafirs, economic interests of, 82; social structure rudimentary, 97; religio-practical acts of, 116; ancestor worship of, 233; far-off deity of, 235.
Kenites, deity of, 271.
Kidd, D., 98, 193, 233.
Kingsley, M., 60, 71, 77; on ancestor worship of W. Africans, 232.
Kinship, importance of, for the development of religion, 69.
Korenas, initiation ceremonies of, 108.
Kwakiutl Indians, religion of, dependent upon social organization, 92.

Ladd, G. T., 177.
Lang, A., 165, 269.
Leonard, A. G., 158, 162, 193, 232 f., 236.
Leuba, J. H., 2, 3, 38, 320, 326, 333.
Lillooet Indians, 247.
Logical outcome of the rejection of the instinct theory of religion, 42.
Lovejoy, A. O., 135, 146.
Luck, belief in, 48, 163 f.
Lumholtz, C., 292, 295, 302
Lyall, C., 155, 191, 248.

McDonald, 116.
McGee, 138 f.
Mackenzie, 296.
Magic, origin of, 54, 176; 'magic power' among the Australians, 147 f.; religion and, 165 ff.; not futile in eyes of primitive man, 170 ff.; inferior races supposed to be adepts in, 170, 197 f.; reflex origin of magic rites, 179; theory of, developed from antecedent spontaneous acts, 181; pre-magical rites, 181; at first indistinguishable from the most primitive religious rites, 182; illustrations of, from *The Golden Bough*, 189; primitive man's science, 190 f.; anti-social and individualistic, 191 f., 195; treatment of disease by, 194; attitude of, toward spirits and deities, 226; interrelations of, with religion, 228; magician as embryo god, 244.
Malay customs, 49 f.; deer-catching, ceremony of, 57 f.; apologies of, to hunted animals, 247.
Mana, Melanesian concept of, 219, 243; nature of, 143; associated with persons and spirits, 144; compared with the Indian idea of *manitou*, 145; *see Manitou*, and Mystic power.
'Man-god,' real nature of, 239, 247 f.
Manitou, nature of, 134; action of, 137; compared with *mana*, 145; *see also* Mystic power.
Marett, 243.
Marshall, W. E., 118.
Marshall, H. R., 27, 205.
Masai, rudimentary religion of, 98.
Matabele, social and religious practices of, 108.
Matthews, W., 128.
Means and ends, adaptation of, place in the development of customs, 48.
Mediating activities, place of, in the development of the valuating consciousness, 59.
Melanesians, 94; belief of, in *mana*, 143 f., 243, 253, 259.
Mental contents, moments in an active process, 39.
Mentality *vs.* mental capacity, 40; functional character of, 321.
Menzies, A., 7.
Miraculous birth of Christ, 348.
Mockler-Ferryman, 67.
Momentum of religious strains, 218.
Monotheism, 295; beginnings of, given a spurious difficulty, 267; psychological, 270; of the Hebrews not unique, 185, 271; not of the metaphysical type, 273; practical, 274; real problem of Hebrew, concerns the development of the character of Yahweh, 275; psychological problem of, 275; ethical, an outcome of reflection, 276 f., 280 f., 285; higher conceptions not qualitatively different from the lower types, 279.
Moonlight dances indifferently sportive and ceremonial, 109 f.

Moqui, Snake dance of, 128.
Morality, identity of, with law and religion in primitive society, 91, 287 ff.
Morals, reflective, dependent upon the social context, 280; concept of a deity a positive factor in, 281; positive significance of primitive Hebrew, 282, cf. 304; relation of, to religion, 287 f.; Australian, that of custom, 299.
Morgan, L. H., 106.
Morris, M., 47, 83, 215.
Murisier, 310.
Mystic power, attributed to animals, 159; associated with tools, 162; attributed to persons and spirits, 144, 243 f., 247 f.; 'the Mystery' of the N. A. Indians, and other peoples, 134 ff.; contrasted with magic power, 147; involved in Australian totemism, 150 f.; in religion of Greece and Rome, 154; in Semitic religion, 155; basis of religion and magic, 156; the notion wide-spread, 156; possible origin of the concept, 157 ff., 239 f.; not a religious concept, 163; truly primitive, 163; modern aspects of this belief, 163 f.; connection of, with the ritual of the scape-goat, 240; the explanation of all skillful acts, 140, 242 *et al.*; power of the primitive deity of this character, 248; suggestions of, in the Old Testament, 248; association of, with the culture-hero, 252 ff.

Nansen, 43, 67, 209, 242.
Napier, 109.
Nassau, 56, 62, 71 f., 73, 77, 86, 91, 196, 205, 233, 235, 268.
Navaho, 62, 85, 128 f.
Niger tribes, 158, 162; sorcery of, 198; interest of, in natural objects, 231 f.; ancestor worship of, 254.

Objective reality, suggestion as to nature of, 342.
Objects of religious valuation, 6.
Orenda, an Iroquois concept, 140; *see also Manitou* and Mystic power.
Osborn, 343.
Osiris, 238, 258.

Palmer, 295.
Pantheism, 205.
Parker, L., 211, 251, 269.
Pathological, difficulty of defining, 307; the unusual and the, 308; identification of, with what is hard to define intellectually, 308; used here as synonymous with the unusual, 308; positive significance of, in religious development, 330.
'Perception of the infinite,' 25, 28, 31; connection of, with mystic potence concept, 136.
Perry, R. B., 262.
Personality, sense of, vague in primitive life, 66 f., 241; development of, 221, 330.
Personification, nature of, 242 f.; does not explain origin of deities, 255.
Pfleiderer, O., 21, 259.
Piacular sacrifice, relation of, to the sacrificial meal, 216.
Piepenbring, C., 346.
Pierce, A. H., 323.
Playful activities, 37; as basis for customs, 58 f.; underlying religious ceremonies, 100 *et al.*
Political structure and religion, 89 f., 96 f., 258 f.
Powell, Major, on Indian medicine practices, 203.
Practical activities, 37, 103; religion secondary to, 214; significance of, in origin of ceremonies, 47, 100; need no explanation here, 100; in Iroquois festivals, 106; in Zuñi natal ceremonies, 104 f.; in construction of Wichita lodges, 105; religious significance of, among the Wakamba, Bushmen, Kayans, 116 f.; special case of the Todas, 117 ff.; in religion of the ancient Romans, 120 f.; *see* Activity.
Pratt, J. B., 4.
Pre-religious character of primitive customs, 60.
Primitive man, probable mental status, 33; suggestibility of, 317; nature of superiority of culture races to, 34; character of, according to Frazer, 165 ff.; Jevons' theory of, 174; hypothetical character of, 176 f.; the universe of, the tribe, 270; vague

concept of personality, *see* Personality.
Prince, M., 235.
Psychological concepts, naïve use of, 29.
Psychology of religion, problems of, 1, 7, 16, 22, 23, 32, 43, 266 f.; nature of the work thus far done, 2 ff.; question of the material or content of, 4 ff., 24; differentiation of, from general psychology, 5 f.; functional statement, 8 f.; relation of the hypothesis of supernaturalism to, 9, 18; content *vs.* value in, 14; limitation of, to existential aspects unjustifiable, 18; preliminary to all other treatments of religion, 19, 22; not confined to thoughts, feelings, and impulses, 38; significance of objective factors in, 42; attitude of, toward valuations of the religionist, 264 f.; instinct-theories of religion pseudo-psychological, 26; and evolution of religion, 32; possibility of, 36; not to be separated from the ethnology of religion, 38.
Pueblo, complicated religious life of, 93; politics and religion of, interwoven, 104; natal ceremonies of, 104.

Rain-making ceremonies, significance of, 129; maker of, as an embryo god of fertility, 247.
Reacting organism, a factor in formation of religious types, 127.
Reclus, E., 247.
Rehearsal of combat, 55.
Reincarnation, Australian theory of, 76.
Religion, *see* Psychology of, Attitude, etc.; statements of, practical not existential, 12; evolution of, 24 f., 204 f.; complexity of problem of, 206, *see* Evolution; relation of, to character of social organization, 94 f.; primitive, no longer extant, 24; diverse forms of, not to be arranged serially, 206, 208, 217; question of relative superiority of different strains of, 212; not directly related to the biological struggle for existence, 26; not merely a belief in certain facts, an appreciative attitude, 31; common element in diverse forms, 32; corporate religion not merely the outcome of subjective, 38, 41; valuations of, social origin of, 63 f.; acts of, primarily social, 88, 204; attitude a 'construct', 28, 37, 339; not an ultimate datum, 29; an attitude, 36; not biologically inherited, 36; distinguished from the æsthetic attitude, 84; rudimentary phases of Eskimo, 73; primitive, undifferentiated, 81, contrasted with modern types, 85 f.; and political structure, 89 f., 97 f.; relation of valuations of, to practical valuations, 121; secondary to social processes, 127; Roman, related to practical activities, 129 f.; magic and, 165, 182; Frazer's theory of, 171 f.; Jevons' theory of, 173 f.; relation of, to morals, 287 ff.; relation of, to pathological phenomena, 306 ff.; genuine expressions of, not to be narrowed down to supposedly desirable types, 311; view of reality, 329; concepts of, symbols of valuation, not descriptive terms, 340.
Rink, 90.
Ritual the fundamental element in Roman religion, 131.
Rivers, W. H. R., 94, 114, 117 ff., 192, 212, 237, 240, 252.
Romans, primitive religion of, 129, 155.
Roth, W., 293, 299.
Royce, J., 2.
Rudimentary religion, possibility of, among the Todas, 118; among the Eskimo, 73; of the Australians, *see* Australians.

Sacredness, primitive notions of, and social origin of, 75; ideas of, among the Todas, 120; Australians, 61, 300 f.
Sacred objects and places, 61, 77.
Sacrifice, Toda, a social function, 94, 123; piacular, 216; Shinto, an outgrowth of social activity, 115; not based upon communion, 115.
Saussaye, de la, 256, 259 f.
Schroeder, T., 310.
Science, universality of postulates of, 9 f.; gaps in scientific account of the world not to be filled by noumena,

10, 12; the interrelation of the 'known,' 10, 11; closed system of, 11, 18; facts of religious experience subject to formulation by, 11, 14; instinct-theories not based upon, 25 f.
Secret names, 32, 75; societies, 92.
Semites, 60; tribal religion of, 67; concept of kindred and social intercourse, 69; social character of economic activities, 80 f., 47, 238; religion of, related to social structure, 124; phallic element in religion of, 126 f.; religion and magic among, 200 f.; dependence of, upon the date palm, 215; worship of kings, 246 f.; *see* Yahweh.
Semon, R., 302.
Shinto, attitude of, on cleanliness, 113; nature of sacrifice in, 115; primitive deities of, 240.
Sin, primitive notion of, 282; identity of, with higher notions, 283.
Skeat, W., 50, 57, 90, 314.
Smith, G. A., 271, 278 f., 286.
Smith, W. R., 47, 67, 69, 81, 155, 200 f., 256, 271, 282.
Smyth, R. B., 295, 302.
Snake dance of the Moqui, 128.
Sorcery, *see* Magic, Religion, etc.
Social heredity and religion, 33, 86 f., 221; organization of the Kwakiutl, 92; enjoyment in tribal ceremonies, 62; activity of groups, 101 ff.; origin of religious valuation, 63 ff., 224; *vs.* individual need in religious valuation, 66; group primitive man's universe, 68, 269 f.; organization and primitive religion, 74, 92; quality of religion seen in Toda sacrifice, 94, 124; processes primary in certain Indian ceremonies, 127; in Semitic religion, 200; determination of deities, 250 f., 255 ff.; group the primary postulate, 102; in the development of religion as over against magic, 199 f.; groups, individuality of, 218; organization defective, Wakamba, 108; Kafirs, 97; Masai, 98; Tshi-speaking peoples, 70, 73; Thompson Indians, 107; organization and economic necessity, 208; bodies, unequal development of various aspects of, 208.
Spencer and Gillen, 55, 75 f., 147 f., 154, 183, 187, 194, 210, 213, 292, 294, 298.
Spencer, F. C., 91, 104.
Spirit-beliefs in W. Africa, 70 f., 95; Eskimo, 73; Malay, 73; Kwakiutl, 92; Thompson Indians, 142; Maidu, 141.
Spirit, Holy, at first a practical concept, 344.
Starbuck, E. D., 2.
Stevenson, M. C., 91, 105.
Stites, S. H., 82.
Stoll, O., 3, 310.
Stoops, J. D., 265.
Stow, 58, 108, 117, 241.
Subconscious, the factor of the, in religious valuation, 322 ff.; positive significance of, 326 ff.
Subjective states not primary, 35.
Sumner, N. G., 48, 164.
Supernaturalism in the interpretation of religious consciousness, 6; logic of, 8; inconsistent with the psychology of religion, 9; as explanation and symbol of religious valuation, 319, 351; apparent support of, by some recent psychologists, 302 f.
Supernatural, the, conception of, among the Eskimo, 73; Jevons' theory as to the primitive notion of, 174; a moment in the development of experience, 175.

Taboo, 209.
Tammuz, 126.
Teit, J., 107, 129, 142, 184, 247, 253.
Temperament not a cause of religious variation, 74.
Teutons, deities of, 259 f.
Theal, 109.
Thomas, W. I., 33 f., 49, 209.
Thompson River Indians, primitive social organization, 107; salmon ceremonies of, 129; concept of mystic power, 142; rites of, 183; culture-heroes of, 253.
Tiele, 25, 29, 31, 205.
Todas, economic interests of, 82, 94, 113, 212, 219; dairy religion of, 117; sacrifice, 123; magic, 192; attitude of, toward sorcery, 198; far-away

deities of, 236, 238; belief of, in mystic power, 240.
Topographical conditions affecting religion, 74.
Totemic organizations, 92, 209.
Totemism, association of, with mystic power, 150.
Tribe, gods of, 67, 268.
Trinity, concept of, not at first a dogma, 343.
Trumbull, H. C., 205, 268.
Tshi-speaking negroes, 60, 70.
Tufts, J. H., 41, 65, 279.
Tylor, E. B., 208, 218, 280, 317.

Ultimate nature of religious concepts indeterminate, 266.
Uncapapa, 107.
Universe, meaning of, indeterminate, 339.
Unusual experiences regarded as proofs of a supernatural world, 309; common in all grades of religion, 309; dependent upon religious types of values, 313; relation of, to theory of supernaturalism, 314; positive significance of, in religious development, 330.
Uzzah, 248, 283.

Value-appreciation and value-judgment, 44; relation of, to intermediate activities, 45, 215; dependent upon stable and compact social body, 84; symbolized by deities, 262; symbolism of, among the Todas, 120.
Valuating attitude relatively primary, 32, 44; origin of, 44 ff.; social, 63 f.; range of, 32; in religious development, 30, 32, 265 f., 314 f.; a social category, 64; instinct-theories of religion interpreted from the point of view of, 31; specific, always one-sided, 219.
Value-consciousness, distinction between finite and infinite values a logical one, 280; psychological explanation of religious, 320 ff.; relation of, to the subconscious, 323 f.; excluded by some from scientific treatment, 14; scientific attitude toward religious values, 14; symbolic character of, 14; possibility of a natural history of, 14, 279; relation of, to a functional treatment, 15; difference between scientific and religious points of view with reference to, 15, 16; assumed fixity of, 20; expression of, in personal terms, 226, 229, 262; basis of, usually too narrowly conceived, 229; character of religious, as a basis of unusual experiences, 313; relation of religious, to particular types of experience, 311 f.
Variations not random, 218.
Vegetation, primitive interest in, 231.
Vesta, origin of cult, 131.

Wakamba, 108.
Wakonda, 138 ff.; *see also* Mystic power.
Ward, J., 10.
Webster, H., 93.
Wichita, method of constructing lodges, 105.
Wissler, C., 139, 161, 188.
Whirlwind an expression of *wakonda*, 139.
Worship an extension of social activity, 255.

Yahweh, 89, 248; development of, 271; cult of, not always distinguished from that of the Baals, 272; a war and storm god, 272; unfolding of character of, dependent upon the development of human character, 276; progressively built up rather than revealed, 277; difficulty of accounting for the ethical attributes of, not insuperable, 278; development of the concept of the holiness of, 284; origin of the paternal and conjugal symbolism applied to, 284; social significance of the justness of, 284 f.; highest development of, definitely related to the primitive social life of Israel, 285.
Yoruba-speaking negroes, 70, 91, 97, 232; belief of, in far-off gods, 235.

Zuñi, 104 f.

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